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Dr. Arup Kr. Dhabal
Dr. Anjan Das
Dr. Uttam Kr. Ghorai

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Contents

The Stranger Within: Questioning Race and Settler Nationhood in *Remembering Babylon*

Abhijit Ghosh

Abstract:

This paper treats the issue of racism in the context of David Malouf's novel *Remembering Babylon*. The plot of novel is situated in mid nineteenth century Australia, in a remote village in Queensland surrounded by the harsh Australian outback. The semblance of 'home' that the white settlers had created amid the bleak landscape of the outback is threatened by the emergence of Gemmy, a white youth who had lived for a long time among the aborigines. The attribute of whiteness, symbolizing civilisation and order for the settlers, and thus justifying their supremacy over the land, is challenged by the figure of Gemmy who becomes a confusing, even scary figure for the settlers. I have attempted to analyse the figure of Gemmy with the help of psychological concepts related to racism and tried to show that he emerges as a problematic figure in terms of recent discourses of nation, rights and immigration in Australia.

Key Words: stranger, settler, nationhood, disorder, racism

This paper attempts to read *Remembering Babylon* by David Malouf from the perspective of the concepts developed by Zygmunt Bauman and Mary Douglas whose contribution to the explanation of racism through psychoanalysis is significant. Racism has been explained through the psychoanalytic point of view by several commentators drawing on the work of Lacan, Adorno and Fromm and so on, and even Max Weber had identified the importance of the affective component in explaining racism. A discussion of racism is very much current in the Australian context as the indigenous peoples of Australia have endured more than two centuries of dispossession and as they continue to face oppression and harsh living conditions. The external colonialism by England in the initial phase and then internal colonialism by the European settlers have done irremediable damage to their culture and identity. *Remembering Babylon*, Malouf's stark yet memorable portrait of a mid-nineteenth century settler community in remote Queensland, gives us an opportunity to read the predicament of the white Australians in the face of an ontological crisis. This reading is also significant because the anti-immigration protests of the recent times stand as a counterpoint

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to the settler history of Australia. The public anxiety over immigration can be seen as the reverse of the white anxiety of indigenous land rights especially after the landmark Mabo High Court ruling of1992 which gave recognition to the land rights of the aborigines against the settler whites.

Racism is strongly associated with practice of pollution and purification, the "need to purify the social body":

> Racism – a 'true social phenomenon' inscribes itself in practices (forms of violence, contempt, intolerance, humiliation and exploitation), in discourses and representations which are so many intellectual elaborations of the phantasm of prophylaxis or segregation (the need to purify the social body, to preserve one's own or 'our' identity from all forms of mixing, interbreeding or invasion) which are articulated around stigmata of otherness (name, skin colour, religious practices). (Balibar and Wallerstein 17)

Mary Douglas has linked the idea of race to the idea of order in society by arguing that the notion of 'race' is a containment of the fear of the other, the idea of 'who we are' set against 'who we are not', a form of order based on an exaggeration of difference. Explaining the production of the 'other', Clarke says, "the construction of the other is about both perception and fear of difference" (14). Douglas, however extends the notion of difference and introduces ideas of purification and pollution: "I believe that ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without, above and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created" (Douglas 1996 4). Thus, Douglas combines notions of 'difference' and 'pollution' and talks about the fear of disorder and maintenance of order through the construction and preservation of social boundaries.

In *Remembering Babylon*, the straightforward system of constructing boundaries between the self and other based on difference, is problematized through Gemmy, who is a figure representing, simultaneously, both self and the other. The ambiguity of his being brings into focus the concept of 'self' that is based on the colour of skin, the visual distinctiveness of being white. That Gemmy is both white and not quite so, threatens the ontological belief of the white settler community. He is a stranger from without who compels the settler community to face a crisis, which is also a moral crisis because they sense,

although they are unable to define it, that their belief in order based on difference between black and white is on the verge of a rupture. Building on Douglas's notion of 'pollution' we may say that Gemmy is seen by the white community as having polluted their existence, one who has crossed the boundaries and risked breaking the social order based upon it and exposed the community to 'pollution'. The indigenous 'others' have invaded their society through Gemmy. Gemmy has committed a transgression, by living with the savages, and then returning to destroy the tidy world of their community, a replica of 'home' that they had managed to construct in the wilderness. Their attempt to build order amid disorder, their claiming the land from the wilderness and transforming it, and fencing it off, is disturbed by this intrusion of otherness. Gemmy, they know, cannot be reclaimed, but they fear that they are in danger of losing their whiteness if he lives among them for long. As a transgressor he has to be dealt with, and the settlers are driven by their anxieties to punish him and throw him out. The plot, situated in the mid nineteenth century Australia, is nonetheless contemporary in the sense that the ideas of pollution/purification are also relevant to 'New Racism', which argues that racism has not ended but has evolved into newer forms. The proponents of 'new racism' claim that nowadays, in the so called first world societies, where there is a significant diaspora population, policy makers create artificial borders to keep out the immigrants in order to preserve culture and protect order in society.

Gemmy is a hybrid, a human being who is neither here nor there, white in colour and black in his acquired habits. Even as a kid in Victorian England, he had never known civilized notions or a good, healthy life. Living as a street orphan, a 'maggot', and then as a boy-slave to a rat-catcher in the dark and grimy London reminiscent of Dickens, he was merely a 'sub-human' being in the 'civilized' part of the world. Fleeing from there he had accidentally boarded a ship, where his slavish life continued till he was thrown overboard. As he lay dying on a remote Australian shore, he was rescued by a group of aborigines, who chanced upon him in their wandering way of life. Gradually, being accepted into the group, he began a new life, adapting and learning the tricks of survival as was always his lot. He was a kid of twelve or thirteen when he had started his life among the natives, and lived with them for long enough to make him think of his earlier existence as a memory of a past life. His very being confuses the ontological status of whiteness, and therefore, disturbs the white settlers:

> "He had started out white. No question. When he fell in with the blacks – at thirteen, was it? – he had been like any other child, one of their

> own for instance. . . . But had he remained white? . . . Could you lose it? Not just language, but *it*. *It*.
>
> For the fact was, when you looked at him sometimes he was not white. His skin might be but not his features. The whole cast of his face gave him the look of one of Them" (36).

When Gemmy enters the settler community, he is a stranger in more ways than one. His intrusion disturbs the normal order of the community. The concept of the 'stranger' developed by Zygmunt Bauman may be referred to here in order to analyse this 'strange' intrusion. Although the concept was formulated by Bauman in his studies on the Holocaust, where the Jew is identified as the 'universal stranger', it seems to be valuable for our study. Bauman introduces the notion of the 'stranger' in order to explain the psychological implications of a racist attitude. 'Strangers' are people who cause anxiety by invading our existence and disturbing the neat divisions of our social world. We have to take them into account whether we like it or not; they are neither 'us' nor 'them', neither friends nor enemies, and by confusing the boundaries between the self and other they threaten to destroy order in society. Their transgression of boundaries and their denial of accepted oppositions expose the fragility of the imaginary lines of social division. In this novel, Gemmy can be thought of as a 'stranger' who though not visually resembling a black aborigine, bears the impressions of blackness in his very being, and is for that reason abhorred by most of the people in the settlement. The text, it may be argued, questions ideas of whiteness, white superiority or supremacy, and the ideas of race, civilization and progress associated with the notion of whiteness through the in-between figure of Gemmy. He is the stranger within the white community who with his coming in their midst brings all the fears and misgiving associated with blackness that they had tried hard to secure themselves against. The settler's dread of the wild, alien and hostile land and its fearsome black natives are projected onto Gemmy; all the white notions of cultural refinement and progress are felt to be in danger as they feel threatened by his presence. This fear, Clarke argues, is "a psychological manifestation, a projection and internalisation of our fear of difference, of being polluted, of being psychologically invaded by otherness" (4). The settlers become increasingly suspicious of him, and, especially after the visit by the two natives, they look upon him as a 'spy' who could hurl the blacks upon them any time: "Was he in league with the blacks? As infiltrator, as spy? Did he slip off when they were not watching . . . and make contact with them" (34). Strangers are looked upon with suspicion because they break the dividing line, and as Bauman says, "they bring the 'outside' 'inside' and poison the comfort of order with

the suspicion of chaos" (Bauman 1990 56). Racism develops from the fear of disorder and chaos and the figure of the stranger inspires hatred since he represents the beginning of disorder.

Clarke, building upon the Freudian notion of the 'uncanny' and Bauman's concept of the 'stranger' develops the notion of the Australian aborigine as the 'uncanny stranger' (75) and explores its implications to Australian nationhood. According to him the native aborigine confuses the settler experience of 'home' in Australia. The sense of national identity of a White Australian and the conceptions of nationhood of Australia as essentially 'white' is challenged by the presence of natives and their legitimate claim to the land. Here, from its origin as a penal colony, the settlers were the real 'strangers', but, but due to unequal power equations the indigenous were easily dispossessed and relegated to the periphery. From the beginning the indigenous became marginal to the nation-building project in Australia. The indigenous were treated as 'strangers' – "as those who would enter, or collide with, the sphere of civilization" (Clarke 75). The indigenous were thus excluded from the experience of home. The dispossession of the aborigine was sustained on the misconception (based on western notions of ownership and legality) that the aborigines did not own the land, but merely foraged over it. The early settlers refused to recognise any prior rights of the Aboriginal people over the land using the term terra nullius (empty land) to describe large areas of Australia in the early maps (Spencer 137). Such a misconception not only secured the repression of violent memories of subjugation of the aborigines but also the memory of dislocation from "their own ethnic spaces …their own landscapes as they came into those of others" (Clarke 76). Clarke introduces the concept of the 'uncanny' to attempt to understand the predicament of the settlers:

> What settlers have split off and placed in the indigenous other comes back to haunt them. The 'uncanny to remind ourselves , is 'that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar'. What we have projected into others, and have repressed within ourselves, comes back to haunt us. This is the essence of the uncanny, and of the psychodynamic dimension of strangeness. (76)

Thus for the Australians the indigenous continue to inspire dread and their outback aboriginal settlements are a constant reminder to the settlers of the original dispossession: "it reminds settler Australia of its own less than glorious beginnings as both a penal colony

where violence and desperation reigned, and as a harsh and unforgiving society where poverty and social collapse were ever threatening" (Clarke 76).

Gemmy is 'different' from the people of the white community, not only because of his strangeness, but also because of his relation to the land. The vast, harsh Australian outback is strange, inhospitable and fearsome for the settler community. To Gemmy, on the other hand, the outback is a space which, like the aborigines, he has made his own. In this novel Gemmy represents a communion with nature, a human being who shares with nature an inexpressible bond learned from his aboriginal hosts. His botanical forays into the bush accompanying Frazer, the only person in the settlement who is able to see him as a beginning rather than a dead end, shows his intimate relationship with the plants, the flowers and fruits and the landscape as a whole. It is a landscape, which is rough, sterile and meaningless to the settlers, that is endowed with meaning for him. Frazer, the clergyman, with his unbridled energy and enthusiasm to gain access to the abundant yet unknown and disesteemed flora of the land, can be seen both as a person who perceives the human worth of Gemmy and as the researcher who is engaged in an enterprise to map the flora of an alien land. Gemmy is a liminal figure in society, a person who has crossed borders and who stands at the threshold of something new – a human being who though white, is not bewildered by the vast wilderness like his compatriots, but one who has made the land his own.

Conclusion:

A close reading of the novel, may lead us to treat the text as metaphor for the problems involving immigration in recent times. The concept of nationhood, citizenship and land rights is problematic in Australia as indicated before and therefore the association of immigrants with 'stangers' becomes very important in the context of the novel. Gemmy has emerged as a figure who not only represents the native 'other', but also becomes a mirror that reflects and reveals the shortcomings of the white 'self', and therefore, is more fearful, embarrassing and irritating to the whites. His marginality, the circumstances of his life from the beginning, and his eagerness to make himself small, useful and agreeable in order to survive, is countered by his potential status as a hybrid figure, a human being who has not only combined in his self the colonial, 'civilized' white, and the native aborigine but also the space around him, the Australian outback. The problem of nationhood, is therefore, ideally resolved through the figure of Gemmy. Although the plot is situated in the Victorian era, Gemmy emerges as a modern symbol, acting as a counterpoint to the discourse of immigration and the latent attitudes of racism enclosed by it.

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Significance of *Śrī* in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* Philosophy

Banani Barman

Abstract:

Viśiṣṭādvaita is a name given to the philosophy of Rāmānuja and his followers. *Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda* amalgamates the doctrine of monism and the cult of devotion. According to *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy the ultimate goal of life is *mokṣa*. *Bhaktiyoga* and *prapatti* are the two main ways to attain this goal. *Bhakti* basically means loving devotion towards God. *Śaraṇagati* is the absolute surrender of the self to the God. It is comparatively more easy and can be performed by any person at one time in their life. Now the question is *śaraṇāgati* to whom? The simple answer is '*Śrīman Nārāyaṇa*'. But who is '*Śrī*'? In this paper an attempt is made to find out the reason why Rāmānuja has taken refuge of Her before *Nārāyaṇa* in his famous *Gadāyas*. Moreover, it will be tried to sketch out the nature of *Śrī* and its significance in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy.

Key Words: *Viśiṣṭādvaita, Śaraṇāgati, Nārāyaṇa, Śrī, Śeṣitva*

I

Legacy of Viśiṣṭādvaita:

Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy flourished in 11th century C.E. mostly in south India. Its origin is mainly associated with the great philosopher Rāmānuja (1017C.E.-1137C.E.). However, before him from the 2nd to 9th century C.E. a group of mystics known as *Ālvārs* had been considered as the ancient preceptors of this rich philosophical system. Their love of God, visions and ecstatic experiences constitute the backbone of the theology of *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. Their devotional songs, prayers were circulated among the people of south India mainly in oral form. Nāthmuni (824 C.E.-924 C.E.) set them to writings and put them to singing in the temples. The next figure of this system was Yāmunmuni, who was also known as Ālvāndār. He lived between 916 C.E. to 1036 C.E. and developed the system by contributing a few independent philosophical works. Though Yāmunmuni was not the direct teacher of Rāmānuja but he was considered as the spiritual inspirer of Rāmānuja. The works of Rāmānuja like *Śribhāṣya, Gitābhāṣya, Śaraṇāgatigadāya, Vedārthasaṃgraha* had supplied

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a strong philosophical foundation of *Viśiṣtādvaita* philosophy. In his *Vedārthasaṃgraha*, Rāmānuja had mentioned the names of the ancient exponents like Bodhāyana, Taṇka, Dramiḍa, Guhadeva, Kapardi and Bhāruci. From the above, it may be observed that *Viśiṣtādvaita* was not a new system founded by Rāmānuja. It was already in existence from the ancient times. Rāmānuja consolidated and systematized the ancient views in a philosophical framework. *Viśiṣtādvaita* is a name given to the philosophy of Rāmānuja and his followers. After Rāmānuja the school got divided into two groups based on eighteen doctrinal matters. *Vaḍagalai* sect or the northern group was centered at the *Varadarājaswāmī* temple at Kanchipuram and the *Tengalai* sect or the southern group was centered at the temple of *Ranganātha* at Srirangam.

II

Central idea of *Viśiṣtādvaita:*

Viśiṣtādvaitavāda amalgamates the doctrine of monism and the cult of devotion. According to Rāmānuja, *Brahman* is self-synthetic whole with *cit* and *acit* as His components. *Brahman* is qualified by the individual selves and matters. He does not exist without being qualified by them. Thus *Brahman* with *cit* and *acit* as its *prakāras* or attributes is the only reality and Rāmānuja's doctrine is therefore called the *Viśiṣtādvaita*. *Brahman* is identified absolute with God of religion who is worshipped by human beings. *Brahman* denotes the highest *Puruṣa*, *Puruṣottama* or *Nārāyaṇa* in whom all types of the blemishes are by nature expelled. He possesses unlimited auspicious qualities.[1] *Brahman* or *Iśvara* is real eternal and independent. The self and matter are also real and eternal but their reality is utterly dependent on that of *Iśvara*. *Cit* and *acit* are not essentially the same as *Brahman*. They have existence only as the body of *Brahman*. *Iśvara* is the material cause and *cit* and *acit* constitute His body.[2] He is efficient cause too because He creates, controls the world. Out of delight, God creates sustains and finally destroys his own creation.[3] According to *Viśiṣtādvaita* philosophy the ultimate goal of life is *mokṣa*. *Bhaktiyoga* and *prapatti* are the two main ways to attain this goal. *Bhakti* basically means loving devotion towards God. *Śaraṇāgati* is the absolute surrender of the self to the God. It is comparatively more easy and can be performed by any person at one time in their life. Rāmānuja has indicated in his *Gadātraya* the path of *śaraṇāgati* as a sure and direct means to *mokṣa*.

Now the question is *śaraṇāgati* to whom? The simple answer is '*Śrīman Nārāyaṇa*'. But who is *Śrī*? In this paper an attempt is made to find out the reason why Rāmānuja has taken refuge of her before *Nārāyaṇa* in his famous *Gadāyas*. Moreover, it will be tried to sketch out the nature of *Śrī* and its significance in *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy.

III

Significance of *Śrī* :

Yāmunāchārya:

Yāmuna in his *Catuḥślokī* honoured *Śrī* or *Lakṣmī* as *Lokaikeśvarī*.[4] It means *Śrī* is the sovereign of the universe. *Iśvara* is the ruler and controller of the universe. Therefore, *Śrī*, the female version of the *Iśvara* too should enjoy the same status as that of the *Iśvara*. She is the ruler and controller of the universe. Yāmuna argued that both the physical universe as well as the transcendental spiritual universe ruled by Goddess *Śrī*. The same truth is emphasized by the sacred text which says that Goddess, the consort of God is the ruler of the entire universe. As per example, *Śrīsūkta* of *Ṛgveda* stated that *Śrī* is the *Iśvarī* of the *Sarvabhūtas*. *Śrī* is the ruler not merely in the capacity of Her being as a consort of *Iśvara* but also as a Divine Being enjoying equal status with Him. According to Yāmuna, Her glory is boundless and immeasurable. Even Her lord cannot comprehend it in its entirely in the same way as He failed to assess His own greatness.[5]

Rāmānujāchārya:

Rāmānuja has indicated in his *Gadātraya* the path of *śaraṇāgati* as a sure and direct means to *mokṣa*. The poem is considered as a dialogue between the poet at the one side and the divine couple on the other side. The *Gadāya* generally divided into two parts at the first part the poet takes refuge to the Goddess *Śrī* most cordially. When he receives Her promise then he further proceeds to take refuge at the feet of *Nārāyaṇa*. In the second part, after memorizing his wondrous qualities the poet has made a full confession of his inadequacies and praying for forgiveness. In return he is assured that in spite of being fully aware of his faults *Nārayaṇa* will give him all he has been desired as he has uttered the famous *dvaya-mantra*. For exploring the importance of *Śrī* I am going to explain the first praying of Rāmānuja. The prayer is-

> "Bhagavan Nārayaṇa abhimatā anurūpā svarūparūpa guṇavibhava aiśvarya śilādi anavadhikātiśaya asaṃkhyeya kalyāṇaguṇagaṇāṃ padmavanālayāṃ bhagavatīṃ śrīyaṃ devīṃ nityānapayinīṃ niravadyāṃ devadeva divya mahiṣīm akhilajaganmātaram āśaraṇyaśaraṇyām ananyaśaraṇaḥ śaraṇam ahaṃ prapadye"//[6]

Here the words '*bhagavan*' and '*Nārayaṇa*' indicate the fullness of *guṇa* and *vibhūti* and *Śrī Lakṣmī* is closely associated with these qualities. It should be noticed that the words '*anurūpā'* and '*abhimatā'* are used in conjuction for there may be some cases where it is '*anumatā'* and not '*anurūpā'* and some other where it is '*anurūpā'* but not '*anumatā'*. The object is to dispel such an idea that is to say that both coexist here. The word '*guṇa*' following '*rūpa*' denotes the qualities of the *vigraha*, such as beauty etc. The words '*aiśvarya*' and '*śeela*' are used to denote collection of qualities implied by rularship and accessibility. '*Anavadhika*' is easy understood as greatness with no limit or boundary i.e. with nothing above. The next following four names exemplify the '*paratva*' and '*saulabhya*' of '*Lakṣmī*'. The word '*nityānapayinī*' is used to show that *Lakṣmī* is ever present with and not separated from Her lord, so that She may ever be ready to see that the faults of the souls may be veiled from His notice. The word '*niravadya*' means that unlike '*paramātnam*', She is not unapproachable nor affected with any faults. The word '*mahaṣī*' means the anointed queen, hence She is one whose wishes cannot be transgressed. '*Akhila*' in the phrase '*akhila-jaganmātaram*' denotes that Rāmānuja includes himself among those to whom She is a mother. '*Āśaraṇya*' means persons with no other resource to go for refuge. To show that the speaker includes himself in the class, the word '*aśaraṇyaśaraṇam*' is used. No doubt '*Lakṣmī - śaraṇāgati*' is the preparatory stage. The epithet used here for Her prosperity and purity stress Her roles as the consort of *Nārāyaṇa* and her motherliness.[7]

The significance lies in the fact that Goddess is a mediator between the individual soul and God. No doubt according to Śaraṇāgatigadāya the Goddess who is the first invoked and whom the poet turns to for refuge before *Nārayaṇa*. Before Rāmānuja, *Ālvārs* as *śaraṇāgatas* seek refuge at the feet of *Nārayaṇa* with the intersession of *Śrī* as mediator or *puruṣakāra*.[8] In fact, *śaraṇāgati* is none other than self-surrender at the feet of *Nārāyaṇa* with the conviction that He is the only *upāya* and *upeya*. *Śrī* performs the role as a mediator (*puruṣakāra)*. She mediated on behalf of the sinner and an eternal link of love between the savior and the seeker is created. It is noticed that the prayer starts with the mention of *Śrī*

who is the face of maternal love and who is the interceder (*purṣakār*) for approaching the God, the almighty father. As He like all fathers, is sometimes harass and not easily approachable She has requested first to carry the prayer towards the Him. Hence the *Gadāya* starts with the exposition of the word *Śrī* and *Śrīmat*. She must be approached and Her affectionate permission taken from Her by praying to Her for *puruṣārtha* and also for being made fit for performing the *upāya* i.e. *śaraṇāgati* for achieving the *puruṣārtha*.

Viśiṣtādvaita is the name given to the philosophy of Rāmānuja. It's another name '*Śrīvaiṣṇavism'* stands for the religious aspects of this theistic school of *Vedānta*. The term '*Śrīvaiṣavism*' refers to the system of thought where '*Viṣṇu*' stands along with His consort. She also acts as the mediator between man and God and brings about union between them. She mediates and helps the aspirants to gain *Viṣṇu*'s grace. It is because of this reason the theistic philosophical system of Rāmānuja is significantly known as '*Śrīvaiṣṇavism*'. It is also known as '*Śrīsampradāya*' because *Śrī* is recounted as one of the 'teachers' in the transmission of this tradition. Thus both expressions signify the role of *Śrī* in the process of liberation.

Controversy among the disciples regarding the status of *Śrī*:

According to *Vaḍagalai* sect, *Śrī* is the consort of God and the mother of the universe. She is inseparable from God and shares in the supreme divine essence. The followers of the *Vaḍagalai* sect, argued that *Śrī* is not only the mediator between the soul and God but also shares the power to grant *mokṣa*. On the other hand, *Tengalai* sect argued that though *Śrī* is inseparable from God but She does not able to share the supreme divine essence. She is only the mediator between the soul and God. She has no power to grant *mokṣa* which is exclusively the function of God. Moreover, the *Tengalai* sect argued that She is monadic in nature and belongs to the category of *jīvakoti* (realm of individual soul). But this objection is irrelevant there are no scriptural *Śruti* or *Smriti* statements regarding this view. Even there are no sufficient justification affirming that She is monadic in character and belonging to the *jīvakoti*. Rather we may have argued that as an integral part of *Viṣṇu*, She cannot be anything but infinite in character. *Viṣṇupurāṇa* uttered that *Śrī* is inseparable from *Viṣṇu*.[9] Whatever form God incarnates Himself in the physical universe *Lakṣmī* takes Her birth to be His consort along with God appropriate to the role to be played by Him.

Vaḍagalai asserted that like *Nārāyaṇa*, *Śrī* has the power to give *mokṣa* to the aspirants. Venkatāchārya (1268 C.E.-1369 C.E.) in his writings has tried to establish that *Śrī* has qualities like *karaṇatva*, *vyakatva*, *niyantrtva*. He rejected the view that *Śrī* has only meditative power. Then he established that *Śrī* has the power of *upāyatva* too and he proved it showing the references from *Śruti*, *Smriti* and *Śāstra*. He uttered in his famous writing –

> asyeśānā tvamasi jagataḥ saṃśyantī mukundaṃ/ lakṣmīḥ padmā jaladhitanayā viṣṇu patnīndireti//yannāmāni śrutiparipaṇānyebamābarttyanto/ nābarttante dūritapabanaprerite janmacakre// [10]

The most important objection of the *Tenkalai* sect is that she is unable to grant *mokṣa*. Being the integral part of the God, She also partakes in the major cosmic function of creation sustenance and dissolution. The utmost question whether *Śrī* serves as an *upāya* or means at the time of observing self-surrender for liberation. However, the doubt does not appear to be relevant. If She is integrally related to *Nārāyaṇa* as the term '*Śriman Nārāyaṇa*' appearing in the *Śaraṇāgati mantra* signifies, She too is naturally part of the *upāya*. The *hymn* of the *Śrisūkta* explicitly says: 'I surrender to *Lakṣmī* and I seek her refuge' This *hymn* implies self-surrender to *Lakṣmī* as a means to *mokṣa*.[11] The next question is whether She is dependent reality or independent reality? '*Lakṣmītantra*' and '*Ahirbudhnya Samhitā*' presents Goddess as the *śeṣa* of Lord. According to *Vaiṣṇava* religious literature *Lakṣmī* or *Śrī* is taken as an absolutely independent *tattva*. '*Śeṣitva'* can be applicable to both. Actually God and Goddess together constitute one *paratattva* in terms of the integral reality not in the sense of *tādātmya* or absolute identity. *Śeṣitva* or Lordship inheres in both. Lordship does not exclusively belong to the Supreme Lord but it equally applicable to Goddess too. However, here lies the dilemma. If She is considered as an independent reality like God the problem of two deities arises.

After discussion we may say that the *śeṣatva* or the dependent character of *Śrī* is assumed by Her voluntary out of Her own will with mutual agreement between the Lord and Her-self. This does not indicate Her subordinate status. Parāsar Bhattar (1092 C.E.-1174 C.E.) uttered that as a consort of the Supreme lord, She had been chosen to remain *śeṣabhūta* to the latter presumably out of respect and love for the Lord. As per example, Krṣṇa voluntary chose to become a charioteer for Arjuna and acted as one who was subordinate to Arjuna, but the assumption of such a status out of His free will did not affect the supremacy

of Lord Krsṇa as the ruler of the universe. The same argumentation holds good for the *śeṣatva* of *Śrī*. The assumption of a specific characteristic like *śeṣatva* out of one's free will does not affect the intrinsic nature of Her sovereignty. [12]

IV

Conclusion:

Śrī being as a loving and inseparable consort of *Nārāyaṇa* enjoys an equal ontological status with *Nārāyaṇa* and the divine couple together constitute the concept of *paratattva* in the name of '*Śrīman Nārāyaṇa*'. The divine couple function together as the Supreme ruler of the universe and partake in all the important divine functions like creation, protection etc. Though *Śrī* is equal to *Nārāyaṇa* in all respects, why she is held in higher esteem? Actually She possesses all motherly qualities such as compassion, forgiveness. She has a tendency to overlook the offences of the devotees. Being the mother of all creatures, She has a natural tender affection (*vātsalya*) towards all. On the other hand, *Nārāyaṇa* has certain unique qualities like *daṇḍa-dhāratva*. He imposes punishment to the sinners. However, She has a natural inclination to ignore the offences because of Her motherly compassionate attitude. If *Nārāyaṇa* stands for fatherly justice She stands for motherly love for all. *Śrī* acts as an interceder on behalf of the sinners and recommended them to receive His grace. Both sects overemphasize this characteristic of *Śrī*. Whether *Śrī* is to be regarded as playing only the role of *puruṣakāra*? Following Parasar Bhattar we may give a mundane analogy of the two loving couple who choose a distinctive role for smooth running of their family. Both are equal in all respects and both are capable of performing each other role, if they so desire. In the same way in the divine family both are able to give *mokṣa* but *Śrī* acts as an interceder on behalf of the sinners and recommended them to receive His grace.[13]

Endnotes:

1. Nirguṇapratipādaka nirastanikhila doṣa'navadhikatiśaya asamkheya kalyānguṇa gaṇaḥ puruṣottamo abhidhiyate-Śrībhāṣya 1.1.1
2. Iśvarascit acit ceti padārtha tritayam hariḥ / Iśvarasciditi prokto jivodrśyamcit punariti// -Sarvadarśansaṃgraha, Rāmānujadarśanam-8

3. Lokavattu līlākaibalyam –Vedāntasūtra 2.1.33
4. …tam tvam dasa iti prapanna iti ca stosyamyaham nirvaya
5. lokaikeśvarī loknathadayite dante dayam te bidan// Catuḥślokī 2
6. Yasyāste mahimānamātmana iva tvadvallabho'pi prabhuḥ
7. nālaṃ matum-iyattayā nirabadhim nityanukulam svataḥ /… Catuḥślokī 2
8. Śaraṇāgatigadāya-1
9. Śaraṇāgatigadāya-1 (concept taken from a Bengali book written by Sri Nrisingha Ramanujadas, the famous scholar of Viśiṣṭādvaitadarśan)
10. Tiruppabai 18
11. "Viṣṇoh śrīranapāyin" -Viṣṇupurāṇa-1.8.17
12. Śristuti-8
13. … Śaraṇaṃ prapadye-tava caraṇāravindayoḥ bharanyāsaṃ karomi …-Śrīsūktabhāṣya p.34-35
14. …yadyapi bhagavadapekṣayā ubhayoḥ śeṣatvaṃ eka-rūpaṃ vaktavyam ,tathāpi devyāḥ sarveśvaratva-pratipādaka śruti-smrtyādi-bahupramāṇa virodhāt, svataḥ śeṣatvābhāve siddhe, aicchika śeṣatvam-ādāya paryavasyati… Śrīsūktabhāṣya p.60
15. Piteba tvat preyan Janani paripūrṇāgasi jane/hitaḥ srotobritya bhabati ca kadācit kaluṣadhīḥ /kimetat nirdoṣaḥ ka iha jagatīti tvamucitai rupāyairbismārya svajanayasi mātā tadasi naḥ // Śrīguṇaratnakośa-52

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Mask in Mass Communication: A Particular Case Study with 'Chhannachhara Natya Sangha', Adityapur, Birbhum

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Abstract:

Mask is an essential and important tool for non-verbal communication. Mask is used in dances in theatres for accelerating public impact. From ancient times, mask is used for different social and religious purposes. But with each and every outcome, mask creates long-lasting impact on the mind of the people. It is as it were a mix of levity with gravity. Serious issues can be imparted with simple and lighter mode for communication. Mask dances are used in different social awareness programmes, too. The paper tries to look into the impact of the mask dances on society around with particular reference to 'Chhannachhara Natya Sangha' of Adityapur, Birbhum. The proprietor of the group Shri Sukumar Das has been interviewed in 3 times with a sample question to reach to the hypothesis of the paper. Moreover, Indian Museum, Kolkata has been revisited on August, 2017 as a field survey to collect authentic data.

Key Words: mask, theatre, mass communication, non-verbal communication, awareness

Mask (Masque) was the Renaissance product of Italy and it was broadly exercised in England during the regin of Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I. Mainly it was played with songs, dances, musics with splendid costumes. It was enacted for the purpose of court entertainment. Mainly mythological and allegorical characters are there to serve the purpose of such plays. Sometimes, it was in the form of poetic drama. In early 17th Century England, masque (or mask) was considered one of the finest artistic talents of the day (Abrams & Harpham, 2015: 211).

'Mask' has been used as an ornament in Bharat's Natya Shastra (Narayan: 2004, 63). Masks can be traced back to antiquity from the rock art traditions as well as in ancient Indian architecture as motifs – Kirttimukha or Simhamukha (Indian Museum, visited 10/09/2017). In general, people wear mask to hide their identity. Not only that masks can create mixed

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feeling in the human psyche only because of its approach and style. The way of being impersonated is the main agenda of wearing mask. In that very sense, men also use masks in regular, day-to-day life. We cannot see them but we can realise, a man being different in his attitudes at different places, is not the same one as he is in reality. For the case of communication, mask comes under the group of non-verbal communication category. With body expressions and gestures without saying a single word, mask dances are presented among the public. The dances are accompanied with instruments in most of the cases. As a folk element mask plays an important role in villages and in tribal areas. But not confined into such remote places, masks with its huge public appeal, impress the city-dwellers, too. In many theatres, masks are now used for the purposes of communication. In this regard, we may remember a theatre production by 'Swapnosandhani' in proscenium, 'Drohokaal' where in the last scene, 'Chhau' had been used for the symbol of new hope and aspiration; it is, as it were, the lady doctor, deserted by everybody, even her nearest and dearest ones, finds new hopes among the mass to make her protest for the sake of honesty and civilisation. Thus, mask dances cater messages in many occasions quite conveniently and it has a long-lasting effect.

Masks are made for social and religious purposes. Religious gods and demi-gods/goddesses like Shiva, Durga, Asura, Kartikeya, Ganesha, Kali, animals like lions, peacocks etc. Mythological characters like Ram, Ravana, Sita, Hanuman, Lakshmana – masks are of such characters. With those characters, sometimes simple religious plays, sometimes mythological plays have been done simply. Characters are projected to be a strong person, like an 'empowered' being. Sometimes, characters are used for the purpose of social issues, some of the programmes, sponsored by state or central governments, mask dances and masks are used. Now, in many religious processions and even for tablos on the Republic Day and also of the Independence Day, Chhau dances are used at a large scale.

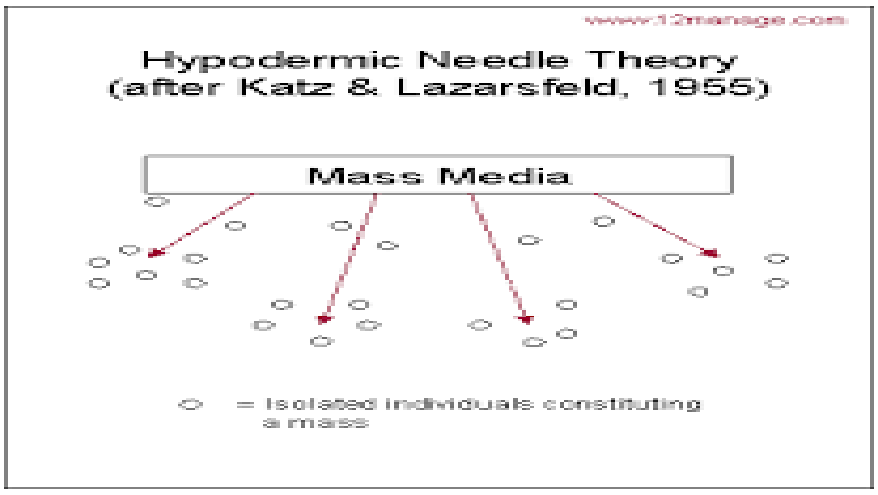
There are so many examples of masks across India which we take a note from our field survey in Indian Museum, Kolkata. The list is presented here:

1) Bhuta Mask – Karnataka
2) Gadaba Mask – Gadaba Community (tribal section), Koraput, Odisha
3) Satriya Mask – Assam
4) Masks in Odisha
5) Masks of Bihar
6) Gambhira Mask – Maldah
7) Gamira Mask - Coochbehar, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri

8) Masks of Rabha Community – West Bengal, Meghalaya, Assam
9) Char-pagal Mask
10) Mapar-Char Mask
11) Masks of Darjeeling
12) Chhau Mask – Purulia

(Source: Indiam Museum, Kolkata)

For the purpose of mass communication, mask is considered an essential folk element which is used to convey messages among the vast gathering with a particular intention of imparting information, giving any important messages – social, or cultural messages at large, aware the people living around. As mask has a popular approach to all irrespective of any particular age or strata of the society, it is an easy tool to communicate with people in a simple mode. In this regard, we may cite a particular theory which may be applied through this mode of communication and that is Hypodermic Needle Theory, another name of the theory is Magic Bullet Theory or Shotgun Theory.



The theory is based upon the behaviorism; the role of mass media upon the mind of the audiences for propaganda is accounted for in this theory. It was started in 1930 Nazi propaganda. The motto was to receive messages by the audiences as a whole. But there was no space for giving any feedback. Mask dances while enacted in an open place, it is open for overall constructive criticism. The idea is thrown from the platform and parallel idea has been groomed along with receiving messages from such shows. A simple approach combining with compact thought-provoking messages, mask dances continually open free space among the mass to think upon in a new dimension.

While searching case studies to support the hypothesis of our proposition, we would like to sort out Birbhum district of West Bengal, a seat of cultural heritage. Adityapur is one

of the villages in Bolpur, Sriniketan in the district of Birbhum. According to Census 2011, there are 414 families residing in Adityapur. Most of the people living here are under the categories of Schedule Castes (57.14%) and Schedule Tribes (8.96%). total population of the village is 1785 among which 842 people are total workers; among them male are 527 in number and female are 315 and 165 people engage in cultivation. Whereas 499 people are numbered as main workers there are 343 marginal workers, too. Among the marginal workers category, 109 male and 234 women are there. Among the population male are 936 in number whereas female are 849. Children between 0-6 age groups constitute 10.92% of total population. Literacy rate of this village is not very low. 71.01% literacy rate is there among which the percentage of male literacy is 78.55% and female 62.76% (http://www.census.co.in).

Chhannachhara Natya Sangha, a group which has started their journey from 1999, where at least 18 families involve in doing mask dances, is the only group which perfoms mask dances almost regularly. They use the form of 'Purulia Chhau' in their dance form but it is not 'chhau' fully. Although no local name has been given in their dance form, they use to call it mask dance as they inherit it from 'Dharam' festival which is observed in Summer (in the first month of Bengali calender) in Labhpur, Birbhum. In that festival, mask dances has been done. Mask of goddess Kali has been used there, a dress in black has to be worn, one stick in one hand has been used as a sharp weapon and napkin, in the other hand, has been used as a symbol of skull. Folk instrument Dhaak was blown along with mantras and performers one after another performs for 2-3 minutes on stage. It is not based on any religious scripts, only dances are performed along with dhaak and mantras. This Sangha first used wooden masks which are used in Gambhira. The propritor of the group is Shri Sukumar Das. He is interviewd by 4 times in this regard. We went to their rehearshal and attended some of their performances to get basic answers of some of the basic questions the paper is aimed at. In several times, we asked them some questions and the questionnaire is divided in two layers. The first layer is of some of the general questions like:

1. What is the name of your group?
2. From when do you start mask dance?
3. Where do you perform with your group?
4. Is there any other group in Adityapur or in Birbhum district which practised mask dances like you?
5. In your long journey, what is your experience in question of spreading mask dances in the society?

The second and important layer of the questionnaire is:

1. Do you have any feedback from the audiences after the show? If yes, how?
2. How much impressive do your mask dance in giving messages for the society?
3. As a performer, do you experience any problem during show? If yes, what kind of it?
4. What is the planning of your group for spreading social messages through your mask dance, in future?

Some of the clippings of their performances are:

To his own word: "We do combine religious theme with contemporary issues. Suppose, on 5th June, while doing a play on the World Environment Day, we did a play on Kaliyo Daman, a story based on Krishna, an avatar of Hindu mythology. We started the play with the subject that all small water pools, rivers, ponds and etc. are now gets polluted. It is for the cause of our capitalistic approach. We cannot care for the environment but without it, we come down to a big zero. Now we have drawn up an imaginary link between these two scenarios; we tell to the people how much pollution at that time when a bird even could not fly over Yamuna River for the poison in the environment. And now, people and their all-consuming activity act like Kaliya snake and make the world poisonous. This is a threat for us." In other show, they perform a complete social theme where animals of the forests protest themselves against deforestation. "People do heinous crime while killing trees and thus they

kill themselves" said Shri Das after his show. This is a social message and similarly there are so many shows they performed, cater message on behalf of mankind. (interview taken on 13/10/2018)

Chhannachhara Natya Sangha presently has 20 members in their group. Among them 3 are women and the rests are men. While asking the question of the places of their performances, most of the group members felt enlightened to have a glorious experience to perform in EZCC, Kolkata and NSD, Delhi. Not only that they went to Janakpur, Nepal with their show Mahishasurmardini. To make their shows more entertaining, they use some form of gymnastics now. For religious plays they use folk elements like khol, kartal, dhol, kansor. At present they use casio instead of harmonium. Even in the show of 'Mahishasuromardini' they use Nahobaat, an instrument like sehnai to create especial essence for creating the sound of dugdugi, a folk instrument which are places in one hand of lord Shiva at the time of his Tandava. For the question the getting feedback from audiences, the artists said, "People come forward, demand more hours for one play. But we have limitations. Sometimes, they give new idea for a new theme, sometimes tell us new point of view of the same plot. That is very interesting and we feel privileged. Children take more interest and it encourages us." (interview taken on 05/06/2018). Not only that mask dances serve the purposes of communal harmony through their shows but a unity and religious messages can be catered through this. Now at the present unrest condition of India, this truly brings us hope that culture can make a good communication apart from any religious sections.

For sending messages to the society through their shows, a strong-willed person as he is, Sukumar Das says, "This is our message to the youth of the society; we do not get food properly for everyday. Still we are continuing with this mask shows. It gives us immense pleasure, happiness and a sense of deep, solid satisfaction which cannot be equal with any materialistic pleasure. We do it from a staunch belief. Youths of today may overlook the need

of their mind. Similarly, they lack their self-confidence and thus are reflected into their activities. Our shows try to cater the messages of self-confidence, beliefs, and our lives are examples how do men can overcome their poverty with strong will, clear vision and positive mind." (interview taken on 05/01/2018). Undoubtedly, this is a great message to the future generation.

Thus, mask is not only a tool for entertainment, rather it is a strong weapon and with it, so many messages can be imparted into the people. The motto of mass communication is to spread messages as a whole to the vast majority with particular intension to achieve particular result. Even in the age of media boom, mask dance plays a significant and a poignant role in mass communication for achieving target-oriented result.

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Revisiting Buddhism and Upanishad from the perspective of Environmental Philosophy

Dr. Madhumita Chatterjee

Abstract:

The crisis earth is facing at present is the result of continuous exploitation, rampant destruction and indiscriminate damage humans have inflicted on nature. A brief historical survey reflects that beginning from the biblical times, down to the times of Plato, Aristotle, St Thomas Aquinas, Descartes and Kant man continued to thinkhimself superior to nature. This sense of superiority,authenticated by anthropocentric ethics assumed aglobaldimension that has thrown the entire planet into a great peril including human beings. To combat the aforesaid crises a new branch of ethics has originated which ascribesintrinsic worth to all beings of nature and admits that man has moral responsibility towards the rest of nature. Ecology, comes close to environmental ethics in prescribing the need to develop a holistic conception of nature where all the components of nature are inter-related . Standing quit near to the ecology and environmental ethics the Buddhist tradition also proclaims an intimate relation between man and nature ,which stems from their epistemic notion of right knowledge or "Samyak-Jnana". Here ethics and epistemology converged at a juncture to emphasize the necessity for preaching love,kindness and compassion towards the entire nature. Upanishadic ideology also inspite of a distinct metaphysical perspective also talk about identification with nature which brings it quite close to the Buddhist tradition. Proximity between classical oriental and modern radical occidental philosophy which however differed in time and place raises a pertinent question as to whether, Buddhist and Upanisadic observations and paper will look into the problem in brief and examine whether the aforesaid inquiry can be answered in affirmative or not.

The paper consists of four sections. Section 1 deals with a brief historical review which reveals origin, development and consequences of man's anthropocentric sprit which have ultimately thrown the planet into the abyss of extinction section 1A mainly concentrates its inquiry on explaining that the at the profound ecological crisis has given birth to a new branch of ethics namely environmental ethics which unlike traditionalmainstreamethics of ethics speaks about an ethics of conservation. Sec-II focuses on the basic presuppositionson which Buddhist principles of inert relatedness and interdependence draws it quite close to the fundamental premises of environmental ethics. Section IIA deals with the basic similarities

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betweenUpanishadic philosophy and Buddhism, which genuinely tried to establish an intimate relation between man and nature. Upanished is especially referred in the section because of it's close proximity with Buddhism in advocating deep reverence for the entire nature. The last section 3A which is also the conclusion tries to answer whether nearness between two cultures- occidental radical philosophy and classical tradition of Buddhism and Upanishads in any way help us to frame Upanishadic and Buddhism environmental ethics or not .

Key Words : Nature, Man, Buddhism, Upanishad, Environmental Ethics

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SEC - 1

"God said, let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the Earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the Earth."(Genesis 1:24-8;Singer,p 204)

The aforesaid Biblical commandment, clearly reveals that man amidst all creatures of nature was ascribed a special place of significance in the divine plan. More explicitly, he was given an exclusive dominion over the natural world as well as other living beings on this Earth. Encouraged by the divine sanctions, man tried to subdue nature, causing rampant destruction and indiscriminate exploitation, to rest to the rest of nature. A brief historical exposition reveals that the tradition which started by claiming man's supremacy over others, continued further in the rationalist tradition of Plato and Aristotle which had a profound influence on European consciousness for centuries. In fact Platonic morality and Aristotelian ethics offered supreme value to humans who were thought to be uniquely valuable and essentially distinct from others. (Johnson 9-11). Nature in this tradition was observed as an object which can be freely used and dominated. Christianity absorbed both the Biblical and the Greek traditions, which also observed man as possessing immortal soul amidst other beings of nature. (Callicott and Palmer 14) Medieval philosophers – namely St. Thomas Aquinas echoed the same anthropocentric spirit, where man stands at the center of creation and is justified in using other creatures for his varied purposes .Unfortunately, the period of Renaissance also witnessed the development of humanism where, man continued to play the central role which further widened the gulf between man and the rest of the nature. (Singer 216) Kant, the most significant child of enlightenment claimed man as an end in itself and

treated animals simply as mere means to serve the end. (Kant239)Finally, capitalism and intense industrialization encouraged further exploitation, and nature suffered from irreparable damage.

Copernican revolution and Darwin's discovery, tried to bridge the gulf between man and nature, but their efforts to a great extent met an unthinkable failure and man still continues to think himself superior to nature, exploiting her at random. Truly speaking advanced and sophisticated technology coupled with deep-rooted anthropocentric philosophy have inspired man to conquer nature and radically transform her. Such transformation has reached a crucial threshold that he himself is facing a crisis related to his own survival. In fact, man's destruction have gradually diminished the life span of different species of plants and animals. Moreover, seas and oceans are polluted by the regular discharge of oil products, rise in global temperature caused subsequent melting of glaciers increasing the possibility of flood in low-lying areas, atmospheric pollution caused by automobile exhaust exposed urban population to cardiac problems and respiratory diseases. Again, alienation from nature of which man is an originally an integral part is disastrously harming his mental well-being, which in turn has adversely affected his creativity and spontaneity.(Callicot and Palmer 18)

SEC – 1A

Fortunately, this profound ecological crisis has at least led many philosophers to believe that to overcome the aforesaid crisis and to save the entire planet from extinction it is necessary to equip humanity with a new ethics, which would ultimately guide man's interaction with nature. The urge for survival has made philosopher like Aldo Leopold to comment that if man wants to survive the crisis he must change his present attitude towards nature and develop a new ethics, an ethics of conservation.

Our discussion draws us very near towards a more fundamental inquiry, as to, what exactly is meant by the term 'ethics'? Etymologically the word ethics is derived from the term 'ethikos' which is related to the word 'ethos' or 'character' (Vardy and Grosch14). Sometimes, the word also means customs, usage and habits, which are to be followed by the members of the society, since the ideal of social welfare is attached to it. 'Ethics' or moral philosophy thus tries to provide us with a systematic knowledge of moral principles and also acts as a guidance as to how to act in accordance with the aforesaid moral principles. Ethics also makes an attempt to provide an ideal or a set of ideals which continuously evaluates

human actions in accordance with those ideals. Repeated reference to the social background also constitutes an indispensible constituent of ethical theory and practice. Ethics therefore, as a discipline tries to transcend the concept of individual interests to attain the ideal of welfare of all.

Broadly viewed, Ethical studies have been classified in recent times as substantive or normative ethics 'meta-ethics' and 'descriptive ethics'. The following paper will mainly restrict it's inquiry on the concept of substantive or normative ethics, since such ethics is concerned with questions like, what kind of actions may be termed as 'good' or 'right'? What are the basic principles or criteria by which we can determine, whether our actions are right or good in life ? Whether we have any obligations or responsibility towards others? What should be the nature of a just society? What makes one a good person?(Frankena 4-5)

All these questions reveal that traditionalwestern substantive or normative ethics concentrates upon finding answers within the domain of human community only. In fact, humans have remained the central focus of western ethical tradition, which clearly stipulated that humans have moral responsibility towards other members of human community only. Values are ascribed to human individual who are thought to be unique, having language, reason and immortal soul. Actions, are judged to be good or bad, only in relation to other human beings only. Environmental ethics, contrary to mainstream European normative ethics, extends the notion of moral community from human beings to include animals, plants and other entities of nature, and man's actions are to be evaluated in his interactions with other beings of nature as well More explicitly, this new ethics, unlike traditional ethics rests on fundamental observations, which include ascription of inherent worth to all beings and entities of nature, including human beings – with whom we share the world and secondly, admitting our moral responsibility towards nature and all her beings.

In other words environmental ethics reminds us that nature should not be thought as a mere bundle of resources, since it has intrinsic value, and hence ought to be treated with due respect. This new awareness scheme thus considers humans to be an integral part of nature, who can create a just society by replacing his desire for conquering nature, by and ethics which will treat others with due respect.

Environmental Ethics while pursuing thistask of relating man with nature comes quite close to the basic premises of ecology as a science – since both encourage, observing the entire nature as an organic entity where all its members are inextricably related to each other

thereby constituting a web of nature. Ecology, to put it otherwise quite akin to environmental ethics also believes in the principle of interdependence amidst different parts of nature, where a non-hierarchal world is dreamt of replacing a dominating and highly stratified society. Moreover, aforesaid disciplines aim to place man within nature and prescribe the need to develop a holistic conception of nature following certain restrictions which would regulate man's future course of actions, while interacting with other members of the Earth's community.

SEC – 2

Close to the basic pre-suppositions on which environmental ethics and ecology rest, comes Buddhist ethics, who spoke infavor of practicing, love, kindness and compassion towards all. A retrospective study of Buddhist philosophy seems essential at this crucial juncture since our green and blue planet vibrating with life- force is standing on the verge of extinction. Buddhism, quite similar to ecology and environmental ethics unlike the traditional western approach proclaimed an intimate relation with nature, where a non- stratified society, practicingnon-violence or ahimsa, karuna and maitri were highly appreciated to translate the ideal of a just society into reality Buddha throughout his life delivered sermons and prescribed rules for the recluses to make them feel indebted to the invaluable natural gifts and advised them not to exploit nature. Theory and practice thus converged at a point in Buddhism which added a holistic dimension to the same to be more specific, Buddhist concern for nature and life of all creatures, was observed through practicing pratimoksha rules and Uposadha observances,---- all of which reinforced a positive relation between human beings and natural word (Pandey p 27).

A deeper and reflective analysis of Buddhist ethics reveals that attitude towards nature is originally derived from their epistemic notion of right knowledge or 'samyakjnana. Avidya or lack of right knowledge, was considered in Buddhism as the root cause of all sufferings including inability to perceive the reality as a whole, considering the unreal or fragmentary truths as real, conceiving impure as pure, treating suffering as happiness, taking impermanent as permanent (Pandey 48). Man's unlimited desire or trsna, greedlobha, illusion or moha and hatred or dvesa are the results of 'avidya' or ignorance. Man in Buddha's opinion under the spell of ignorance performs morally wrong actions which adversely affect nature causing environmental pollution. Avidya or ignorance in fact instills a feeling of complete separation

and exclusive existence from the rest of nature. Ecological crisis, from Buddhist perspective is therefore the result of Avidya or ignorance which in turns generates desire, greed, hatred in the mind. To overcome this crucial problem, it is essential to transcend the limitations of narrow anthropocentricity which would help us to regain the lost vision of wholeness.Keeping in view the aim of developing an intimate man - nature relation, Buddha advocated the theory of mutual interdependence, where every phenomena of nature depended on the other phenomena of the earth, on the environment and other beings of nature. Firm belief in this theory of dependent origination according to Buddha would encourage development of qualities like alobha or freedom from greed, amoha or freedom from illusion and advesa or freedom from hatred. A liberated mind can only observe an organic view of nature, since a mind which is pure internally would essentially and spontaneously nourish and nurture love and feel compassion towards all life. Bodhisattva, is such an ideal who unlike other beings of the earth stands as an incarnation of enlightenment who feels great compassion for all creatures and identifies oneself with other beings of the earth. Etymologically the term 'Bodhi' signifies a realization or understanding of the ultimate reality and 'sattvameans one who is motivated by the universal and infinite compassion (Marshall 42) A true bodhisattva, therefore can be defined as individual who is free from self-interest and expresses compassion to all. Entire nature is therefore a complex system(SelinHelain 356-357) and liberation from suffering can be attained by leading a virtuous life where virtue signifies an ability to realize oneness with nature. Karaniyametta sutra, for example prescribes everyone to practice love and compassion towards all creatures, because all beings and entities of the nature are inter- related, inter-connected and mutually dependent on other. (Batchelor and Brown 23) No living being it is clamed should be deprived of life since the life of each individual being is precious for itself, just as our own life is precious to us. Majjima-nikaya also enlightens our vision by removing and dispelling evil thought, replacing them by desirable and beneficial thoughts,diverting mind from evil thought, and tracing the root cause of such thoughts for gradual refinement.Moreover suppression of evil thought takes one to the state of perfection or brahmavihara when one spontaneously practices karuna or compassion to living creature, displays mettaor loving-kindness towards all, expresses mudita or cheerfulness in others prosperity and maintains mental clam and equanimity which contribute to universal concern for all (Pandey 205).

Right knowledge or samyakjnana, which would replace evil thought, is therefore essential for moral purification and development of a clear knowledge of reality, where one

would discover oneself as aninextricable part of nature, intimately related with other beings. Bodhisattva, acts an inspiration, to others since in Buddhist tradition he possesses right knowledge, which refrains him from destroying or harming other life- forms, Moreover, cultivation of compassion paves his way towards liberation or nirvana, where he is free from fear and ignorance, the essential limitations which binds one to the biological world.

Leading right livelihood is also focused with great significance in Buddhist tradition, where only those professions are morally accepted which never involves harming other beings. Buddha's pragmatism made him realize that it is not actually possible to withdraw oneself completely from committing violence, to sustain one's existence in this mortal world. Buddha, therefore advised one to refrain from certain profession which would minimize violence as far as possible. Trading in weapons and business in meat and breathing things, liquor and poisons were strictly forbidden by Buddha, and were observed with rigorous disfavor since such trades violate the fundamental premise on which Buddhist ethics stands. This form of rational and moderate doctrine of non-violence may be considered as one of the significant contribution of Buddhism to human civilization.

SEC – 2A

Buddhist approach towards life and the world reminds us about Upanishadic philosophy where we find that Upanishad and Buddhism never thought man as isolated from nature. On the other hand both the philosophical thoughts made genuine attempts to establish close relation between man and nature. In fact, deep and profound influence of Upanishadic ideology on Buddha made him advocate 'oneness' with nature. Upainshadic philosophy emanated from the metaphysical notion of Brahman as an all pervading reality where multifarious phenomena are treated as manifestations of Brahman the unitary self which however was not admitted within the framework of Buddhist ethics. But both Buddhism and Upanishads converged at a point when they both speak of inter-relatedness and inter-dependence amidst different entities and components of nature. This feeling of mutual dependence gave birth to the notion of non-violence which is central to both the philosophical thoughts. Moreover, unlike anthropocentric ethics of the west, both the aforesaid oriental schools of thought deeply felt that so long human beings remained under the spell of ignorance, Maya or Avidya their views of the world would continue to be fragmentedand segregated. Such feeling of seclusion would only generate hatred and violence towards

others. On the contrary right knowledge would help one to truly identify oneself with the rest of the creation. Hence, a virtuous man in Upanishadic and Buddhist traditions never suffer from the narrow and limited thoughts of 'I' and mine and treat others with equal respect , and feel deep reverence for the entire nature.

SEC – 3

Conclusion:

A brief exposition on fundamental notions of Buddhist ethics and Upanishadic philosophy and their similarities seems essential at this crucial juncture to remind us that the environment is standing amidst a great crisis mostly manufactured by man. Infact, ecology and environmental ethics, also realizing importance of the grave crisis which tends to threaten our survival want to inquire whether man wants to live in continuity with nature or desires to stand in stark apposition to nature destroying her at random? A close look at radical occidental and classical oriental philosophies, discussed so far closely reveal that to save ourselves from the impending crisis we need to re – analyse, and re- value the philosophy, ethics and practices which originated from the aforesaid traditions. Such rethinking, would help us to frame a new way of living which in turn would help to develop a positive relation with nature. Here, it needs to be mentioned that Upanishadic philosophy, in particular harped on the process of active identification with other beings and this feeling of 'oneness' with others, would restrict one from committing a violence against others where 'others' mean to commit violence against one's own self. Such close observations on the basic ideologies of Upanishadic tradition would help to re – orient our present perspective and foster a holistic approach both in thought and action. Moreover Buddhism also quite close to the Upainshads in it's approach can also be taken as a brilliant example of non – anthropocentric ethics which also needs to be re-considered to overcome the limitations of anthropocentric ethics, which has over shadowed humanity.

Proximity between radical philosophies of the west and oriental cultures, brings us near our investigation as to whether the oriental traditional philosophies - namely Upainshads and Buddhism which comes quite close to environmental ethics, can help us to conceptualize Upanshadic and Buddhist environmental ethics or not? Truly speaking, environmental ethics originated and acquired a universal dimension only recently, emanating out of a sheer moral and spiritual crisis. In spite of its nascent origin, environmental ethics enjoys a place of

considerable significance as a distinct discipline because of its deep and reflective analysis about how man should relate himself with nature. Astonishingly however classical oriental cultures and modern occidental radical philosophy meet at a point where man is placed within nature, and not outside it but, the problem lies in the fact that it is really difficult to formulate Upanishadic and Buddhist environment ethics, inspite of such nearness. It is because only recently with the gradual development and expansion of environmental ethics as a discipline, a new tendency to re-observe and re-interpret our oriental religious philosophies, and culture and determining its relation with aforesaid radical philosophy has just started. Moreover, environmental ethics is also different from the aforesaid Indian tradition in raising a new set of inquiries and issues, which urges to offer solutions which were not separately articulated and addressed by the latter ones. On the other hand Upanishadic and Buddhist philosophical discussions about man - nature relation sprang spontaneously and naturally from their holistic approach which cannot be classified as a separate discipline to be termed as Upanishadic or Buddhist environmental ethics. More explicitly environmental crisis man confronts today inspired philosophers of the west to frame guidelines to determine how man ought to interact with nature. On the other hand the crisis man is facing presently did not acquire a global dimension during earlier periods of Upanishads. Absence of serious crisis overshadowing our conscious efforts to relate man and nature which can earn the designation of a separate discipline did not appear as a problem earlier which perhaps refrained Indian seers from understanding the necessity for developing any systematic and well- articulated discipline which can truly acquire the designation of a separate discipline called environmental ethics. However deep and reflective insights about life and the world and contemporary problems which classical India faced during the time of Upanishad and Buddha inspired Indian seers to anticipate the real significance of the problems which humanity was about to confront in future and such reflective wisdom governed man nature relation in the earlier times.

Moreover, environmental ethics or eco-centric ethics is essentially pre- occupied with questions including rights or moral standing of the non-human world. European mainstream ethics particularly Renaissance and Enlightenment were vocal about individual rights of a person where he or she is treated as an autonomous individual. But Upanishads and Buddhist prescriptions speaks only about moral responsibility of man towards other beings and entities ,which are reflected in their moral principles of non -violence, love and compassion towards all beings and things of nature . Question of rights or moral standing are not addressed in oriental traditions which are so as vividly addressed in modern environmental ethics. In spite

of these inherent differences the meeting point between oriental and occidental cultures rest on the fact that both cultures essentially try to relate man with nature. Moreover question of rights or moral standing though not explicitly addressed in oriental cultures still the question of moral responsibility can be well compared to the right based environmental ethics. It is because moral responsibility not to harm others and practice love and compassion towards other bears an implication that others to whom we have moral responsibility have a right to be treated with respect and loving –kindness .

Again, Buddhism aims to attain spiritual perfection or nirvana which is considered to be the highest goal to a Buddhist. Nirvana may be defined as a calm and peaceful state of mind free from all cravings and desires that limits one within the boundaries of mortal world. But Buddhism in it's urge to attain spiritual perfection never denies the significance of the biological world in which we live. Ethical values which tends to guide human pursuits individually and collectively are focused attentively in Buddhism. Buddhism in its venture to attain perfection undertook a pragmatic approach where signification of leading a virtuous life even within this mortal world is focused. Spirituality and morality converged in Buddhist philosophical tradition and practicing morality was considered as a significant path to attend spirituality. In Upanshadic philosophy however significance of biological and social aspects ---- which constitute inseparable components of human existence were underplayed especially after the attainment of spiritual perfection. In fact Buddhism more than Upanishads comes close to the fundamental postulates of ecology and environmental ethics, which attaches great significance in evaluating man's actions including actions concerning mans interaction with this biological world . Moreover Buddhism as a religious philosophy successfully connected itself with the ideal of social welfare and unlike Upanishads, it did not remain confined within the goal of attaining individual liberation only. Buddhist convergence of spirituality with morality brought it close to environmental ethics which also gives importance to the biological world.

Contrary to the mainstream anthropocentric ethics Buddhism and Upanishad along with environmental ethics exhibit certain obvious differences but still come close to each other where man is not only considered as the only morally significant person but includes within his moral community other beings and entities. An all – comprehensive thought was cherished by Upanishadic and Buddhist tradition thousands of years back, where we hear the need of identification with the rest of nature. Environmental ethics similarly also tries to transcend the boundaries of anthropocentrism and prescribe reverence for all life, which

springs spontaneously from the core of an enlightened soul. A changed and liberated soul , it is believed in both oriental and occidental cultures can transform our present role as a conqueror to an inseparable member of nature. Buddhist and Uanishadic thought though failed to acquire the status and prestige of a separate discipline, called environmental ethics, yet they remind us about wisdom that gave birth to an all-embracing ethical vision which mark aforesaid traditions as living philosophies articulating a positive man-nature symbiosis over and above mere formulation of abstract moral rules and injunction. Such non-anthropocentric tradition offer quite akin to environmental ethics offer a holistic vision, towards nature which would equip us to combat our present global crisis intellectually, and actively.

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Understanding Marcel's Notion of Availability

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Abstract:

One of the central issues of the French existential philosopher Gabriel Marcel's philosophy is the notion of "availability". He makes a distinction between problem and mystery. A problem is an inquiry considered in relation to an object. A mystery implies the inalienability between the self (not transcendental) and what is given. One is to solve the problem, but in mystery one is caught up. Philosophy deals with the ultimate mystery of human life, i.e., we are caught up in the mystery of "Being". Marcel begins his philosophical discussion with the anti-Cartesian slogan: "I feel, therefore I am". An attempt has been made here to understand and analyze the importance of Marcel's view on the notion of availability in the context of intersubjectivity. Availability means being open to others, being present to others, not merely in terms of physical proximity. When we are caught up in the mystery of Being, the investigation of availability or presence reveals to us how we are able to recognize "the other", and what this recognition means. We find a close affinity between Marcel and Tagore so far as this recognition is made possible through creative fidelity leading finally towards the enjoyment of the nearness of "the Infinite".

Key Words: availability, Marcel, reciprocal commitment, creative fidelity, Tagore, creative spirit, hope.

Gabriel-Honore Marcel (1889-1973), French philosopher, dramatist, music critic and literary critic, was associated with the phenomenological and existentialist movements of the 20th century European philosophy. Although his philosophy is generally known as theistic existential philosophy, he himself used to prefer the more neutral expression "neo-Socratic" signifying a dialogical and inchoate nature of philosophical reflections. Against Descartes, Marcel held that it is sensation that is indubitable, not thought. For him, "I feel, therefore I am". He reacted against the "broken world" characterized by an obsession with technology leading to the loss of self-worth and a feeling of alienation. He always felt the urge to develop

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the inner life of the spirit in creativity and freedom along with its ethical dimensions. It is interesting to note that music played a central role in the course of Marcel's philosophical development. He expressed his view in his conversation with Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005), French philosopher best known for his contribution to phenomenology and hermeneutics. For Marcel, philosophy was the continent of his work, his plays formed the off-shore islands, and music, the most intense and profound, conjoins the two. However, in this article, an attempt has been made to understand and analyze Marcel's view on the notion of availability in view of his philosophical understanding of human subjectivity. My objective is to show the importance of the notion of availability in the context of human intersubjectivity, especially in the face of the problem of human relationships, and also to explore the affinity between Marcel and Tagore (1861-1941) in this context.

Marcel was initially motivated by his dissatisfaction with Cartesianism, and he was influenced by Husserl's rejection of idealism. In *Being and Having*, he has expressed his discontent with the severance between intellect and life as reflected in Cartesian philosophy. Descartes' *cogito,* for him, is methodological and not radical. Marcel, with other existential thinkers, acknowledges the radicality of the subject, and firmly believes that subject is not a given fact. In *Metaphysical Journal*, and also in *The Philosophy of Existence*, Marcel takes man and the notion of subjectivity into account. Despite the fact that Marcel is generally considered as a (Christian) existentialist, he is unique in his study of subject; he does not follow the well-known path of the existential understanding of man.

Existence is sensible and immediately participated in through sensation. It is not an object of thought, or consciousness of the thinking self – the *cogito*; it is rather beyond demonstration by rational argument. Our original and basic situation is that we are engaged in being, that we are. Our spiritual task is to affirm our being. Marcel intensely focuses on man's situation. The identity of the subject as a cognitive subject who apprehends the public object of knowledge is the identity of the man (of theory) who has been abstracted from his situation in the world. For Marcel, the essence of man is to be in a situation. Man's being-in-a-situation is a concrete event. It is to be noted that Marcel, unlike Jaspers (1883-1969), is more interested in participation, not in self-affirmation;[1] he discovers man not in his consciousness of liberty but in his being-in-a-situation. All the other existential thinkers, of course, believe in participation; but, they insist on participation through self-affirmation or self-projection.

Marcel acknowledges on the one hand that "myself" is the "indecomposable unity", and, on the other hand, he argues that man is inseparable from his situation, from his participation. In fact, for Marcel, one cannot say anything about "myself" but is the source of whatever can be said. The subject is already affirming himself/herself not by saying anything but by simply being, by being involved in a situation. We should remember that Heidegger (1889-1976) talked about the ontological foundation of the subject, he insisted on the lived intimacy and given immediacy which is presupposed by any knowledge situation.[2] Marcel also insists that "Being" is primary and knowledge is secondary.[3] But, Marcel, unlike Heidegger, believes in the mystery of "Being"; he never raises the question regarding the problem of the meaning of "Being". For Marcel, "Being" is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be realized. For Marcel, man rather starts with this openness by being intensely involved in his situation; one is primarily the "awareness" of himself/herself as being "there". And, here sensation becomes meaningful. Sensation reveals the unreflected and uninterpreted primal mode for religious faith – the faith in the infinite. He breaks with the whole subject-object mode of affirming existence. He opposes existence to objectivity.

As Sinari points out, according to Marcel, one's awareness of himself as being there is as dependent on his inner experience, as it is on the fact that he is "incarnate".[4] This understanding of Marcel reminds us of Tagore's "consciousness of the real" as reflected in his writing *The Religion of Man*. For Tagore, reality is known to us, not because we think of it, but because we directly feel it. Our logical mind may not capture it, but it is never banished from our consciousness. Tagore writes, "The reality of my own self is immediate and indubitable … The consciousness of the real within me seeks for its own corroboration the touch of the real outside me."[5] Tagore says, reality manifests itself in the unity of man and nature; Marcel recounts, the incarnate self is a "manifest reality", and it produces man's objectivity. In fact, while Tagore has expressed his view through poetic speculation by applying his intense aesthetic intuition, Marcel is more faithful to man's participation in a situation. For Marcel, the incarnate self is not separated from body. In *Metaphysical Journal* Marcel clearly states that 'I am my body".[6] In order to participate in any situation or in order to be anyone, body is first used. It is to be noted that Marcel, unlike the other existential thinkers, is reluctant to raise the question about the priority of existence to essence. The fundamental situation of man is inalienable from his physical presence, and, therefore, from objectivity. One can hardly feel himself existing without body, without the primary consciousness of objectivity. One is not what one has but what one becomes; and, this

becoming is not independent of his relationships. And, here lies the similarity between Tagore and Marcel, both have believed that the dignity and joy of human existence lie in harmonious intersubjetcive (or interpersonal) relationships culminating in the relation with the infinite. Truth is revealed through such relationships. Tagore has described it as a "sensitiveness of soul" in its relationships with human surroundings; Marcel would call it "sensation" or "awareness".

What is noticeable in this context is that the incarnate subject, as Marcel says, through its being-in-a-situation, lives through a relationship in which it along with its body is present to others. Marcel insists that body is the source of all relationships. Thus, we find in Marcel, from the very beginning, the subject is placed in interpersonal relationships. Marcel argues that if the subject were bodyless then the world would have ceased to be his. Marcel, unlike Heidegger, never makes any sharp distinction between authentic and inauthentic subject. One's attachment to "Being" expresses his authenticity, and such attachment actually signifies his intense involvement in a situation, his presence to others. Hence, one's participation is to be understood in terms of his/her presence to objectivity and to others. But, it is to be noted that here "availability" or "presence" does not necessarily mean mere physical proximity; being available to others means being able to come out of oneself, or to transcend oneself to others. "Presence" involves one's experience of the other. If a person sitting in a room with me hardly makes himself present to me, or I don't make myself present to him, he will be farther away from me than a loved one who is far away from me.[7] Thus, in the room, each of us makes himself unavailable to the other, and turns the other into an object. "Presence" never recognizes the other as an object; it is standing outside of oneself. This practice of standing outside of oneself, as both Marcel and Tagore would say, gradually relates to and evokes response from the infinite or at least the world at large. One of Tagore's songs is relevant in this context: "Apon hote bahir hoye baire dnara / Buker majhe biswaloker pabi sara / Ei je bipul legechhe tor majhete utthuk neche / Sakol paran dik na sara" .

Marcel, from the very beginning of his philosophy, has acknowledged that on the plane of worldly existence man is inevitably conscious of others. In Marcel we are never acquainted with the notion of exclusivity. As both Cooper and Sinari draw our attention, the French existentialist's approach to the problem of the existence of other men is partly phenomenological, and gives rise to his famous doctrine of "disponibility" or "availability" (*disponibilite*).[8] Marcel has developed his notion of availability in his writings like *Being and Having* and *The Philosophy of Existence*. Marcel uses both the words "availability" and

"unavailability"(*indisponibilite*); sometimes, in English he uses the terms "handiness" and "unhandiness". Marcel's ideas were developed before Sartre (1905-1980) had expressed his thought on commitment. Marcel wonders how Sartre can talk about total commitment. By commitment Sartre means something more than responsibility. As cooper recognizes, commitment, for Sartre, is 'a way of resolving how one should live' in response to this recognition that one is responsible for his engagement with some project.[9] When one is freely and self-consciously dedicated to a great project he would be considered as committed. Commitment indicates wholeness and integrity instead of passing fancy. Through commitment one simply transforms himself from a contingency to a passion. Marcel, in 'On the ontological mystery', clearly states that total commitment may induce complete conviction but that would be a "sclerosis of habit" which is incompatible with freedom.[10] It is true that Marcel never describes the subject as the Cartesian cogito, "the spectator watching a show", nor he is found to acknowledge the notion of exclusive subjectivity. He seems to differ from the traditional existential thinkers in this context. Man is free but he is also interpersonally existent being. What appears to be true from the Heideggerian and the Sartrian thought is that in terms of actuality one is not prior to the others but in terms of possibility one becomes prior to the others. For Marcel, it is in fact erroneous to presume that the reality of myself is absolutely prior to that of others; it is difficult to imagine that my act of existing can ever be severed from a reference to the others. The very act through which "I *am*" implies "my allusion" to the other people. I exist because and in spite of other people. Marcel, a theist, thus, never sees "the Other" as the source of self-estrangement. In reality, for Marcel, one can hardly remain "aloof and indifferent" since he/she continuously encounters others, and with others has a common relation to the transcendental. Marcel, in his different works, has consistently insisted that the subject is actually "an actor"; and, an actor can perform and enjoy his acting only if he is "available" to others, i.e., he can learn and listen from his fellow actors. On the other hand, this ability of making oneself open to others has been considered by Tagore as the performance of the existent being – "the artist" who misses the companionship of his/her own being through "the diminution" of his/her self.[11] Tagore has also expressed this realization in his songs and poems. For example, in one of his songs he has tried to convey that one can find an abode of joy and freedom when he/she becomes able to transcend the confinement that he/she himself/herself has made around himself/herself : " Aaponare diye rachili re ki e aponari aboran! / khule dakh dwar, ontore taar anandoniketon. / … thele de aral ; ghucchibe aandhar - aapnare phel dure / Sahoje takhoni jibon tomar amrite uthibe pure.

However, what matters to Marcel is unavailability to other people. In *Being and Having* he describes unavailability as "rooted in alienation" from other people. Marcel writes, "When I am with an unavailable person, I am conscious of being with someone for whom I do not exist."[12] Availability is, thus, 'a reciprocal relation through which each party is committed not only to treating the other as a free person, but to enabling and collaborating with his freedom.'[13] For Marcel, if there be any commitment then that must be a "reciprocal commitment". It is true that the other is initially a "he" or an "it" for me. But, as we are available to each other, I begin to unfold his/her life; he/she becomes less and less "he"/"she" for me. In fact, on Marcel's account, encountering necessarily implies availability and unfoldment; intersubjectivity "dawns amidst us and, on both the sides, mutual faith figures as a recipient factor."[14] A person can realize himself "qua freedom" as a participant in a reciprocal relation. Outside availability or such reciprocal relation a person is alone, without "collaborators" who can help him "to be freed". Marcel never denies the freedom of the subject, but, such freedom never belongs to the subject itself. While on Heidegger's or on Sartre's account the other might be my "competitor" as a world user and can reduce me to an object, Marcel emphasizes on the other hand that the other might be my "collaborator" and can enhance my potential and freedom. Existential thinkers like Heidegger and Sartre intend to draw our attention to the self-estrangement of the subject due to the predominance of "the Other"; thinkers like Marcel, on the other hand, are much concerned with the alienation of the subject from "the Other". The "captive soul", for Marcel, fails to realize and actualize its potential and freedom fully. I am free and myself only in relation to "the Other", we belong to each other, we explore each other in our common relation to the transcendental. We actually throw ourselves as mutually available.

Our foregoing discussion shows that disponibility which signifies a phenomenon of being available is the basis of every social relationship. It is also to be noted that disponibility can hardly work without "intimacy', "communion" or "co-presence". In fact, the workability of disponibility depends on love, empathy, friendship, fidelity, mutual trust and revelation. Marcel, therefore, puts much emphasis on "creative fidelity" in this context. In his work *Being and Having* Marcel acknowledges that what matters most is not "absolute commitment" but the "fidelity" demanded by such commitment.[15] To exist is to be creative; Marcel writes, "A really alive person is not merely someone who has a taste for life, but somebody who spreads that taste, showering it, as it were, around him …"[16] Hence, this is all about sharing love and friendship, as well as being creative through the performance of fine

arts. We become creatively faithful not only to other persons but also to the infinite. This is our constant desire to elaborate who we are. In Tagore's words, this is our "creative spirit";[17] this is "the harmony of self-adjusting inter-relationship" leading towards the self-realization of oneself in the perspective of the infinite. The ability of self-adjustment in the face of interrelation manifests "the surplus in man" which finds itself in a wider perspective.[18]

In the existential philosophy of Marcel, along with creative fidelity, we also see the important role of hope that gives one the strength to create continually without anticipating favourable or unfavourable outcome. Marcel offers a novel conception of hope. Hope, as he proposes, simply rejects the current situation as final without anticipating a specific result. Hope is, therefore, neither optimism nor resignation; it is neither desire nor fear. Hope, in the philosophy of Marcel, is active willing which derives from humility and not from pride. This is an inclusive will or wanting for others, this is wishing for all. In other words, this is an "ontological exigency" or an "interior urge" for becoming creative in the presence of the other.

According to H. J. Blackham, so far as Marcel is concerned, as liberty is the "primary" subject-object relation, so fidelity is the "ultimate" subject-object relation.[19] Blackham also points out that fidelity is neither "a universal law" nor "a mere act of will". The "concrete historical permanence which I give myself in fidelity cannot be derived from a universal law, however valid", since while the law is "abstract and formal and governs particular cases", in fidelity "I continuously inform myself from within."[20] Again, fidelity is never synonymous with "act of will" because "it is faith in the presence of an other-than-me to which I respond and to which I shall continue to respond."[21] We should note that from Marcel's standpoint Sartre's notion of commitment actually excludes "the openness", one is committed only in connection with his own project or goal. Marcel, therefore, rejects Sartre's notion of commitment as "commitment to principles", and argues in favour of one's direct commitment to persons, to other people and also to God. Fidelity is response and continuous response to person; it can never be rightly practised towards an idea or an ideal, which is "idolatry". Marcel, thus, believes in some sort of "spiritual tie" which is described as "creative fidelity", it actually unites us. It is difficult for us to understand this "creative fidelity" because of its underlying paradox. Though, as originally incarnate, I and the other never to be fusible into "one identical whole", I as such am not exclusively for myself except when I am an inalienable part of a "supra-personal we". We aspire to be free but still we want to live together. Amidst all kind of contingencies we tend to live together in a communion of love; to understand love is to love other, to be communicable is to communicate.

Indisponibility or unavailability negates the possibility of such communion. Availability makes us feel that we are fully ourselves; we experience self-revelation with the presence of the other. Through availability the subject becomes inclusive. And, Being inclusive and open to others, as Tagore also says, is our greatest delight, since it widens the horizon of our bonding (in other words relationship) and connection.

Endnotes:

1. Karl Theodor Jaspers is a German existential philosopher who posed his questions differently from Kant and Husserl. He was interested in the philosophical investigation of the personal sources of man's thinking. His important works are – *Philosophy of Existence, General Psychopathology, Way to Wisdom, Man in the Modern Age*.
2. German philosopher Martin Heidegger has described his view about "Being" in *Being and Time*. For Heidegger, "Being" (*Sein*) stands for the "to be" of *Dasein* or human existence, it actually implies the openness or unconcealedness where human existence is engaged in constant confrontation with the world.
3. See Harold J. Blackham, *Six Existentialist Thinkers*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952, (reprinted in 1967), p. 68.
4. Ramakant A. Sinari, *Reason in Existentialism*, Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1966, p. 99.
5. Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2002, p. 129.
6. Gabriel Marcel, *Metaphysical Journal*, translated by Bernard Wall, Chicago IL: Regnery, 1952, p. 242.
7. See G. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, Chicago IL: Henry Regnery, 1950, p. 206.
8. See David E. Cooper, *Existentialism*: *A Reconstruction*, Oxford and Cambridge: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1990, p. 176, and R. A. Sinari, *Reason in Existentialism*, op. cit., pp. 111-113.
9. D. E. Cooper, *Existentialism: A Reconstruction*, op. cit., p. 173. In *What is Literature?, The Roads to Freedom*, and *Existentialism and Humanism* Sartre talks about commitment. In this paper, for the sake of brevity, I refrain from making further analysis of Sartre's view about commitment and humanism.
10. See Gabriel Marcel, 'On the Ontological Mystery' in G. Marcel, *The Philosophy of Existence*, Harvill, 1948.
11. R. Tagore *The Religion of Man*, op. cit., P. 129.
12. G. Marcel, *Being and Having*, quoted from D. Cooper, *Existentialism: A Reconstruction*, op. cit., p. 176.
13. D. E. Cooper, *Existentialism: A Reconstruction*, op. cit., p. 176.
14. R. A. Sinari, *Reason in Existentialism*.,, op. cit., p. 111.
15. G. Marcel, *Being and Having*, op. cit., p. 45.
16. G. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, Vol. 1, Chicago, Charles Regnery Co., 1951, p. 139.
17. R. Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, op. cit., p. 15.
18. See Ibid., pp. 41-45.
19. H. J. Blackham, *Six Existentialist Thinkers*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1961, p. 74, (first publication, 1952).
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Mystifying Rationality and Demystifying Religion: Swamiji

Dr. Sankar Kumar Biswas

Abstract:

Nineteenth Century Bengal represented an age of creative pursuit, reformatory initiatives and an age of restlessness in its search for truth. The free thinking middle class were carried waves of social reforms that surged and swept the entire Bengal throughout the century. A few thinkers of the society undertook the task to logically explain the meaning of religion as a response to the disregard and marginalization shown towards native traditions by foreign rulers. The other sections of intellectuals of the native society were opposed to the influence of 'European model' and upheld the ideals of ancient Indian heritage. The two opposing trends of liberalism and conservatism were amalgamated together by Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his gifted disciple, Swami Vivekananda. In this article effort will be made to throw light on ideals of unification i.e. not to any reformation or enactment of laws, but construction of the society, which was followed by Swamiji.

Key Words: Colonialism, Revivalism, Monotheism, Synthesis, Spiritualism.

The nineteenth century Bengal was a period of confrontation, uncertainty, skepticism and inquisitiveness. The age was in turmoil with the unending conflict between rationalism and the age of faith. Thus, it induced the conflict between the old and the new ideals. The liberal section of the society welcomed the western rational thinking as the vehicle for progress. They were bent on establishing the fact that western religion, society and philosophy and their eastern counterparts had nothing in common. Thus indigenous traditions came to be marginalized by both westerners and the western-minded intellectuals. This gross neglect and ignoble treatment by the new age liberal's persuaded a section of native intellectuals and scholars to delve deeper into the roots of Indian heritage. The leading role was played by a handful of western educated Hindu scholars. Among them mention may be made of Rammohan Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar.[1] Meanwhile members of Young Bengal started their movement and campaigning to establish western model of reforms. Though their effort welcomed new thoughts and ideas, they failed to present any substitute

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model for the reformative processes. The liberal thoughts of the rationalism influenced members of the elitist society of Indians (Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay, Ramesh Chandra Dutta to name a few was known as new Hindu), who undertook initiatives for upholding ancient Indian heritage and culture.[2] The puritan minded section of elitists (Radhakanta Deb, Sashadhar Tarkachudamani among others) also more or less had the same objective, i.e. to endorse the primitive traditions of Indian civilization. Later, it was Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who pioneered the synthesis between dualism, monotheism, and polytheism. Nation-building and spiritual quest gained more significance than reforms. The merger of the two opposing fronts had a practical and a theoretical aspect. While the practical aspect was meant for common people and was to be followed by *Sadhana* or means of meditation and worship, the theoretical aspect that gained prime importance was emphasis upon 'harmony amongst religions' i.e. "*Jata Mat Tata Path"*.[3] The synthesis of the old and new concept was made possible by Swami Vivekananda following the path shown by his master *(Guru)*, Ramakrishna Paramahansa. The first step towards building the nation was materialized with the foundation of Ramakrishna Mission.

(1)

Response to Colonialism as the mode of reaction:

Bengal was the first and foremost colony of the British; and, just as Bengal became the first colonial province, the initiative to regain its lost glory, cultural heritage, society and civilization began. The *Asiatic Society of Bengal*, founded on 1784 was the culmination of researches made by European scholars on Bengali culture and civilization. Stalwarts like Sir William Jones, H.T.Colebrooke and Wilkinson's among others under the patronage of Warren Hastings were instrumental in making extensive research work and shared the opinion that India had in actuality – a glorious past. They decided that the colonial rule must be legally in tune with the ethnicity of India. Hence we see *Calcutta Madrassa* was established in 1781 and the *Sanskrit College of Banaras* in 1791.[4] The above school of thought was vehemently opposed by James Mill. Mill's book 'History of British India' (1817) clearly depicted the reflection of an imperialist mindset within Indian administrative system. Mill's followers included Thomas Barrington Macaulay, John Malcolm, James Grant Duff, W.W. Hunter etc. and they were of the belief that colonial rule had no harmful aspects. They tried to expound that western philosophy and religion were different from that of the east.[5] In contrast to them were a group of educated Bengali Hindu, who were both attracted

and distracted in context of the colonial rule. Foremost among them were Raja Rammohan Roy and Swami Vivekananda, who were the leaders of the two opposite outfit respectably.[6]

Raja Rammohan Roy had sensed the need for social reforms to respond to the ignorance shown by British rulers. He wanted to undertake religious reforms to facilitate social and political reform work. He read several religious scriptures, and utilized it to his reasoning ability and intellect to reach the core of ultimate truth in religions.[7] He wrote two books *'Vedanta Grantha'* and *'Vedantasaar'* in Bengali (1815) and translated the Upanishad. Gradually he assumed the role of reformers like Martin Luther and Erasmus.[8] Further, the search for truth and rational thinking led Rammohan to establish *Brahmo Samaj* (1828), a community for men who worship *Brahmo*, the highest reality. This western educated section of middle class Bengalis voiced their protest against idolatry and irrational customs that were prevalent in the society. Conflicts arose over the mode and method of reforms. Severe disagreements broke up between Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen, which ultimately led to the split of *Brahmo Samaj* twice i.e. in 1866 and 1878.[9] Ironically, those who wanted to keep away with *Hinduism*, had their thoughts and ideas rooted in *Hindu* belief. They called themselves *"Young Bengal"* or the *"Derozians"*. Eager to reject anything but reason and realism, they strongly condemned the tenets of *Hindu* religion and scoffed at Rammohan and his followers as "half liberals", though they themselves were *Hindus*.[10]

Most of the social reformers devoted their endeavors to ameliorate the deplorable condition of women, who formed half the human populace of the society. They took to the most effective way of implementing the reforms – that is by enactment of laws. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was a proponent of the aforesaid method. Vidyasagar wanted to make social reforms in keeping with ancient traditions and customs. He consulted *'Parasar Samhita'* for formulating the reforms process. He vehemently protested against the '*Age of Consent Act'* of 1891 but at the same time didn't hesitate to marry off a six year old widow.[11] Vidyasagar, much like Rammohan approached social reforms by keeping a delicate balance between scriptural knowledge and rationalistic ideas. In this context, historian Amalesh Tripathi called Vidyasagar a "tradional moderniser".[12]

(2)

Revivalist and reactionary thoughts:

As a response to the restlessness noticed amidst the *Brahmos* longing to attain salvation in the nineteenth century, a group of educated Indians became strongly attached to investigate the roots of Indian civilization. Among others, Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay, Bankim

Chandra Chattopahdya and Ramesh Chandra Dutta are worth mentioning. Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay (1827-1894) though a government servant in occupation during the British Raj, was against the tendency of aping the west by the natives and the so-called social reforms. He felt that foreign ideals could be followed only when one's own customs, heritage, tradition and culture remains unaffected. By one's 'own custom' he referred to patriarchal society and motherland.[13] He wanted to view the ancient India with the eye of a modernist. In his book *"Swapnalobdho Bharater Itihas"* the Hindu state founded by Shivaji was an exemplary model of political achievement. He chose to idealize Shivaji in place of Sri Krishna. He clearly declared, "Except for rational intellect India has nothing more to learn from the West."[14]

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, unlike Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay chose to observe the then society through the perspective of Indian heritage. He purposely strayed away from the ideals of *Vedas* and concentrated on *Dharmasastras* like *Mahabharat, Haribansh, Gita* and *Bhagabat* instead. In place of monotheism, he upheld the principles of immanence. He tried to explain the essence of supernatural from humanistic outlook. His presentation of religion warded off doubts from western education influenced modernists.[15] Bankim Chandra also gave a new meaning to *avatarbad.* [16] Based on rational ideas Bankim redefined *Hinduism* which had its roots not in the west but in the east.

Ramesh Chandra Dutta was another proponent of this trend. J.N.Gupta, the biographer of Ramesh Chandra Dutta mentions that inspired by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Ramesh Chandra wrote as many as four novels in the initial phase, which were namely, '*Bangabijeta', 'Madhabikankan', 'Rajput Jiban Sandhya'* and *'Maharastra Jibanprabhat'*. The themes of these novels were based on administrative system of medieval India from sixteenth century upto the rule of Aurangazeb.[17] His main aims are to represent by rediscovering the past heritage of Indian life and culture.

(3)

Synthesis of action and reaction:

The forerunners of the 'age of enlightenment' though redefined religion or 'people's faith' as 'righteousness' by rediscovering glories of the past, they never took to follow such a path of righteousness themselves. Bankim Chandra had only made a passing reference to following "*Anushilan Dharma*", though it had no mention of Indian spiritualism. Most importantly their movement was limited only to the elitists or to the upper strata of the

society only. However, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his competent disciple, Swami Vivekananda, were not constrained by such prejudice. Thus started the age of 'synthesis'. In the ideology of Ramakrishna for the first time one witnesses the merger of 'thesis' and 'anti-thesis'. He declared –"To attain salvation is our aim: not arguments over the ways to reach it." Two inferences can be made from his words – i) the practical side of religion – which tells us about the merging of thoughts besides practicing religious pursuit. It is meant only for the common people. ii) The theoretical side of religion – which tells us that all the ways lead to the same destination. (*Jata mat Tata path*). Here the 'principle of immanence' of Bankim Chandra gives way to 'polytheism'. It took under its realm the educated middle class including the ones who were stirred up by western philosophies. Referring to such ideology, Ramakrishna declared, "Every individual has the same desire." He further elucidated, "There are many ways to reach the terrace – up the stairs, climbing a rope or mounting bamboo beams etc. But on reaching the terrace, one would find everything made up of the same material."[18] Thus Ramakrishna had been successful in bring back the 'age of belief'. He said, "Believe me; I swear I've seen the God." So Historian Amalesh Tripathy wrote, "The major achievement of Ramakrishna had been – he reinvented the Almighty who was fading into disrepute amidst the squabbles of Brahmos and communal conflicts of Hindus."[19]

Thakur Ramakrishna provided the redefinition of religion in theory, and it was practically executed by Vivekananda. He brought about the synthesis of people-favoured religion with polytheism. Rammohan tried to establish a monotheist faith based on principles of formless divinity and Bankim tried to upheld the tenets of ancient Indian tradition as '*Ideal of Kshatriyas'*. Swamiji, instead, hailed the '*Ideals of Asceticism'*, i.e the synthesis of religion and salvation, as the supreme ideal of an individual. According to Swamiji, a monk is born for the benefit and happiness of others. He is born to die for the needy. To wipe out the tears of the hapless, to prepare the meek and gentle in order to face the ordeals of life, to distribute knowledge and to ignite the dormant fire of fearlessness in others … are the reasons for an ascetic's existence.[20] Thakur had induced Swamiji to bring into the fore the doctrines of *Vedanta* – that which were being practiced elsewhere. Swamiji blended the ideals of a *Kshatriya* (warrior) with that of a *Sannyasi* (ascetic) to formulate the perfect model of a society. He inspired the countrymen by rekindling the spirit of fearlessness, morality and sacrifice. He assured them that the ultimate aim of life should be serving the poor and unprivileged. Swamiji presented a unique solution to the question of improving the condition of women. He said, "Women should be given the right to decide their own future; instead of

waiting for a say from her male counterpart, let her build her own career according to her own intellect…"[21]

According to Swamiji, spiritualism is incorporated within the soul of Indian diaspora. Swamiji was able to spread this concept of spiritualism in foreign lands. [22] Swamiji appealed to the entire world, not only to his fellow countrymen. He boldly declared, "… at the moment the whole world is eagerly anticipating a lot to learn from India's age-old spiritualism. India will have to cater to the spiritual needs of the world. In India only one may find the supreme embodiment of human race… India is morally bound to teach spiritualism throughout the entire planet." [23] While the earlier reformers tried to explain the tenets of Hindu religion in the light of western rationalism, Swamiji followed the exactly opposite path – he defined rationality with the ideals of Indian spiritualism. Thus following the principle of *"Jata Mat Tata Path"* preached by his master, Vivekananda established himself in the unified, universal human essence. He declared, "The entire world is my country." [24] Swamiji also laid equal stress on building a well-built physique –"…a weak brain is incapable of doing all sorts of work, we have to become strong. Today's youths must attain physical toughness, spirituality can come later. My young friends, I only want you to be strong. Play football instead of reading *Bhagavat Gita* – it would be a shorter way for you to reach the heaven. You must understand that with a stronger physique you will be able to grasp the intricacies of Gita better."[25] Swamiji asked the youths to improve their physical ability in order to take part in the process of making a better India.

Conclusion:

Swamiji, in the short time of his career had been able to unveil the vast firmament of universal brotherhood. Being a humanist, he urged his followers to seek God within fellow beings. He asked to have firm faith on man which is a reflection of his self-confidence, and as an ascetic had unbridled love for mankind. He upheld the ideals of an ascetic over that of a *Kshatriya* (warrior). He preached the principles taught by his master which says "the first and last objective of a religion is having direct interaction with God". Most importantly Swamiji's ideology evolved around two important facets of Indian culture – society and religion. Instead of explicitly dealing with the above-mentioned issues, he upheld the outlines of his proposed synthesis. He spoke not of social reforms but about the need for awakening the youth and women populace to build a new India. His viewpoint, thoughts and ideology had sufficient resource to help developing the new generation. Thus Vivekananda's ideals are to be remembered and revered for, as they are relevant even to this day.

He believed that to revitalize the humanity all over the world it was essential to mingle oriental (eastern) spiritualism with economic development on one hand, and to combine the affluent lifestyle of western countries with doctrines of spiritualism on the other. His lifelong mission was primarily aimed to bring about spiritual redemption for the masses. [26] In the backdrop of nineteenth century, Vivekananda had his eyes fixed at the future of humanity.

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Truncated Family Relation in Urban Life of India

Harasankar Adhikari

Abstract:

In India, family is the basic unit of human society because it importantly nurtures its members with a strong bondage. But due to the impact of globalization and rapid urbanization the structure and dynamics of family has been changed. At present, it has been turned into a truncated. A new family relation has developed among the household of the urban housing colony which might be considered as the 'flat culture' creating some crucial problems in household set up. It is mostly related with the parents and their children up to a certain period of life. Especially, the patrilineal relationship has been trapped and similarly matrilineal relation has been maintained only during any occasion. It generally promotes social affluent and social as well as cultural diffusion. Imitation of western culture facilitates cultural indiscipline. Children are the worst sufferer of these broken family relations. Their rigidity, demandingness and so forth are causes of their deviant behavior. So, reformation of family relation, structure and process of the family needs urgent consideration.

Key Words : Children, family relation, truncated and urban

Family as an institution is the first organized effort of human being to make them social being and it made them separate from other living things. From the very beginning of human society, our primitive and uncivilized ancestors had felt the urgent need to survive through collaborative struggle against the animals and natural calamities in the then world[1]. Gradually through this institution, they developed a relation in terms of food hunting and sharing, common living space and their inter- personal and intra-personal relationship made their bonding close and integrity[2]. Depending on the family centric efforts human beings established their societal as well as economic relations with property rights that promoted the urgency of the formation of state[3]. Obviously it had given birth to multi-layered functional dimension of society with its progress and development. All types of division were then marked among the people with their job specification in society. So, the hierarchical division of their own selves (according to their labour) was sincerely nurtured for the purpose of a sharing and caring society.

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Thus, the history of the origin of family was the vital changing factor of the human society. In a household set up, the head of the family nurtured all the members through some rules of relation within the members of the family and with the outside world. Gradually progress and development of the human society led variously to the people's role and contribution to frame a more diversified society[4].

From the theoretical perspective, the study of family is a different matter because everyone has experience of family life and everyone has opinions and feeling on it. According to Henry Summer Maine and his Ancient Law (1861)[5] "the movement of the progressive societies has hitherto been a movement from status to contract"- 'starting as from one terminus of history, from a condition of society in which all the relations of person are summed up in the relations of family, we seemed to have steadily moved towards a phase of social order in which all these relations arise from the free agreement of individuals.'[6]

It is viewed that patriarchal family is a group of men and women, children and slaves, of animate and inanimate property, all connected together by common subjection to the parental power of the chief of the household. It expressed an authority structure in which the senior most male agnate exercised absolute power including that of life and death, over all family members.

Indian family and Urbanisation :

India is a plural or multi-cultural society and it is stratified the one besides, but the domain of kinship is an area in which this is patently evident. The concept of Indian family has been denoted as large and noisy, with parents and children, uncles, aunts and sometimes cousins, presided over by benevolent grandparents, all of them living together under one roof. Its members often squabble among themselves but remain, in most cases, intensely loyal to each other and always present a united front to the outside world[7].

Economic reason, especially the high cost of urban living space is the biggest question of why the joint family would survive. Modernization/industrialization/urbanization/ development, as the case may be, is everywhere accompanied by a change from joint to nuclear families[8].

Urbanisation is the main step denoted remarkably in human development. Urbanization as well as industrialization brings significantly rapid changes in the social mobility of people of every concern. That mobility was due to economic needs and demands. Gradually all inputs for human development were synchronized and a competition among the

countries and within the states got a priority f or development[9]. Only the agro-based economy cannot able to fulfill all the needs of developed human beings. Rapid growth in population size generally makes a scope of out sourcing from rural area to urban. Therefore, as supplement of economic needs the rural people move towards urban area. This migration is linked up with social and economic mobility among people is most urgently welcome in urban area.

From the experiences on the study of the family, it is being deduced that there are mainly three categories of family. Firstly, "the super trader family" which means according to Gary Becker(1981)[10], 'the economic approach', individuals are assumed to be relentlessly pursuing their individual utilities, and in doing this they enter into trades at implicit prices resulting in marriage and the working in the family. While the individual utilities can conclude concern for others the process of utility maximization is carried out uncompromisingly- without constraints or property, norm or convention. The relationship between different members of such 'super trader family' takes the form of 'as if' market transactions at implicit prices have taken leading role in urban society. While the other two- "the glued-together family"- one approach is to ignore individuals altogether and to take the family as the unit in terms of which economic decisions are taken and economic processes function- individuals have no individualities – no individual decisions and individual utility, etc, but only family decisions, family welfare and "the despotic family" is to assume that a despotic head of the family takes all decisions and other just obey. The family behaviour would then be just a reflection of the head's choice function, and family welfare- in terms of revealed preference – would then have to be seen as the maximum and implicit in the head's choice function are not functional in the juncture of the present context of family.

As a consequence of this fact, urban migrants develop and establish their own household set up separately in urban area. And linkage with the rural household is being limited and restricted with a certain frequency or occasionally. In tandem with the effect of globalization and need & demand of the class-conscious citizen's sophisticated environment for residential purpose, the new urban housing unit known as flats/apartments has developed in Kolkata and its added area. It absorbs the urban population of the different socio-economic and religious background. They live in the housing complex/apartments with their own belief and culture. A new culture to be considered as "flat culture" newly settled household in residual flats in housing complex/apartments of different measurement in urban area has given shelter to father- mother and children as first generation in urban family. Usually, the

primary social and economic unit in a flat includes the following function – (1) maintaining the physical health and safety of family members by providing basic necessities (2) providing for emotional growth, motivation and self-esteem within the context of love and security (3) helping to shape a belief system from which goal and values are derived and encouraging shared responsibility for family and community (4) teaching social skills and critical thinking, promoting lifelong education and providing guidance in responding to culture and society and (5) creating a place for recreation and recuperation from external stress is being promoted now a day. But their personal social network and support system have been truncated because the relationship/connection of the kins with their natal families is limited and sometimes, it becomes thinner, while the people in urban housing maintain a 'first order' social network.

Later on the children at their adulthood are usually separated from their parents, even while they are in the same city. In their housing complex/apartments, many family units live together under one roof, but there is no or limited scope of emotional sharing and interaction with each other as per their choice. In many cases, they are not familiar with each other which may be considered as indirect linkage. They are involved in a gossip in their closed doors. They are very much purposive to build up specific relationship with their particular neighbour. It nourishes a special social bond. But it depends on mutual interest of co-residents.

This 'flat culture' creates some crucial problems in household set up. It reminds the exclusive description of slum culture by Jyotirindra Nandi[11] in his '*Baro Ghar Ek Uthon'*. There are also some differences between 'flat culture' and 'slum culture' in respect of social and economic parameters of people of both patterns of cultures. We may consider 'flat culture' as advanced 'slum culture'.

Impact of truncated family relation :

This flat culture is a culture of showing off 'me'. This 'me' syndrome is the cause of self-centre and competitiveness of identity created and status consumption. It symbolizes dependence on domestic helps in everyday life as middle- class character. In their lives they do not have much time because they lead a so-called first order of life. They usually visit shopping malls/market places for entertainment and recreation. But they prefer to purchase daily uses via online marketing system(e-commerce). They prefer fast food rather than cooking at their house. Thus, they maintain a media- bound life style and life choices. The household in 'flat culture' is not much loaded with family relational network. Spouses and

their child(ren) are the absolute members in a household. Majority of the both spouses are working. They are busy with their own life style. It pushes them into an isolated and lonely state. The results are a truncated relation and limited social bonding . To add to it, they cope with material civilization, and their bonding with materials is their identity. It causes spousal conflict of maladjustment and unfaithfulness. Further the media bound cultural syndrome and effect of consumerism lead them to a life of greed/self-love. The chances of emotional ventilation are limited resulting in spousal relational crisis or family crisis. Mutual understanding and healthy leisure are virtually absent in their lives. Gradually they involve in unfaithful relations causing separation and divorce at alarming rate. Absence of guardian supervision and appropriate family network are an addition to this state of living.

We find that care and attention to the grown up children in 'flat culture' is mostly the child centric. Parents' instrumental and expressive role for their child care and attention as appropriate control strategies is limited[12]. The child is under foster care of maid servants/domestic helps or the child is put into the child care institute. So, the child's nature is influenced by parental conflict, estrangement and emotional turmoil[13]. Apparently, family fragmentation and intactness are raising question when the family trend is towards de-institutionalization of marriage and the steady disintegration of the mother-father-child raising unit. Social ecology of parents and child on child development has adverse impact[14].

Further, the child is cybersavvy and they prefer friendship and peer relation (social media based). But in the virtual world they are alone. Parenting is inappropriate, and a child centric and parents hide their lack through various rewards(materials and monetary). A child enters into premarital sex at their high school age[15] . They do not prefer parental monitoring and punishment in their daily affairs. They perform an adult like behaviour at their teenage. Habits of smoking and consumption of alcohol and drugs are their mode of relaxation. We find that their performance in school is not satisfactory many times. Individualization isolates them and they are in anxiety and depression that lead them to commit suicide and they are violent against parents, friends and peers.

Conclusion:

India is highly rich in its heritage and culture. So, integrity with the family members is significant. Their collaborative effort is being restored its role-relation variously in form of nuclear, joint or extended families. But in present days it has been seen as truncated. A new family relation has developed among these families, which is mostly related with the parents and their children up to a certain period of life. Especially, the patrilineal relationship has

been trapped and similarly matrilineal relation has been maintained only during any occasion. The structure, process and functions of family have changed. It generally promotes social affluent and social as well as cultural diffusion. Imitation of western culture facilitates cultural indiscipline. Children are the worst sufferer of these broken family relations. Their rigidity, demandingness and so forth are causes of their deviant behavior. So, reformation of family relation, structure and process of the family needs urgent consideration.

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Communication Lessons from the Life and Works of Swami Vivekananda: A Brief Overview

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Abstract:

The present work presents Swami Vivekananda's communication vision both in theory and practice and attempts to bring to fore the communication lessons as evident from the deeds and events in his life and his works which include his lectures/ speeches and writings available in the public domain in their contemporary relevance. Through situation and content analysis, the work justifies the rightful place of Swami Vivekananda as a role model for effective human communication or, simply put, as a communicator par excellence.

Key Words: Swami Vivekananda, Mass Communication, Group Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Communication for Development

Introduction:

In his landmark speech at the first World's Parliament of Religions (popularly known as the Chicago Address) in September, 1893, the great monk of India, Swami Vivekananda began with the following words, "Sisters and Brothers of America" (Chidatmananda, "CW I" 3). The choice of words was striking. At a time when most speeches would begin with the customary greeting 'Ladies and Gentlemen', Swamiji took the unconventional path of addressing his audience as 'Sisters and Brothers'. For reaping the harvests of a communication, a communicator must begin by firmly establishing his place in the hearts of his communicatees[1]. That is exactly what Swamiji ensured for himself in the hearts of the West through his prudent choice of words. As Swami Nikhilananda later observed:

> "Bowing to Sarasvati, the Goddess of Wisdom, he addressed the audience as 'Sisters and Brothers of America.' Instantly, thousands arose in their seats and gave him loud applause. They were deeply moved to see, at last, a man who discarded formal words and spoke to them with the natural and candid warmth of a brother." (Nikhilananda 133)

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It was just a prelude to what was about to come in the later years from one of the most prodigious communicators in the history of human civilization. Swami Vivekananda's communication acumen may be understood upon going through his lectures/ speeches and writings that were meant for all and a volume of letters written to various individuals by him which are available in the public domain. The present work attempts to bring to fore Swami Vivekananda's communication vision both in theory and practice and examine their contemporary relevance as evident from his words (oral and/or written) and deeds.

Swami Vivekananda as a Mass Communicator:

Following the Chicago Address, the following report appeared in the Indian Mirror: "[T]he name of Swami Vivekananda was unknown to the public till he made his debut on the platform of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago." (The Christian Literature Society for India iii-iv) Such was the impact of the Chicago Address that "the young, unknown monk of India was transformed overnight into an outstanding figure of the religious world. From obscurity he leapt to fame. His life-size portraits were posted in the streets of Chicago, with words 'The Monk Vivekananda' written beneath them and many passers-by would stop to do reverence with bowed heads." (Nikhilananda 137)

Thus, the Chicago Address heralded the arrival of Swami Vivekananda on the global stage and there was no looking back thereafter. But then, the question arises: How did a little-known monk from the distant lands of India become the cynosure of everyone's eyes overnight? Panchapagesan analyzed the linguistic style of Swami Vivekananda with special reference to the opening speech at Chicago (1893) and pointed out certain features that established him as "an orator by divine right" (11). These included:

1. Repetition of expressions to create the effect of 'back-to-front' movement
2. Judicious use of personal pronouns, singular and plural number, the question form
3. Utilizing the beliefs, culture and inhibitions of the listeners to advantage
4. Ensuring stylistic effect through irregular but appropriate syntagmatic structures

Thus, Swamiji's unconventional approach to his audience, be it his unconventional way of addressing them or his unconventional attire grabbed everyone's attention. Another reason behind Swami Vivekananda's success as a mass communicator was his effective usage of simplification as a tool for establishing commonness with his communicatees. This Indian approach to communication which posits communication being 'the act of generalization through simplification' is known as sādhāraṇikaraṇa. That Swami

Vivekananda effectively employed sādhāraṇikaraṇa is evident from his own admission, "Simplicity is the secret. My ideal of language is my Master's language, most colloquial and yet most expressive. It must express the thought which is intended to be conveyed." (Chidatmananda, "CW V" 259)

That Swamiji practised sādhāraṇikaraṇa in letter and spirit is evident from the judicious use of stories, anecdotes and real-life examples in his speeches for explaining extremely complicated matters of human understanding from the Indian antiquity.[2] Swamiji himself acknowledged that he had acquired this skill from Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa who was an expert practitioner of the same. Taking a case in example, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's assertion of 'joto mot, toto poth' is only a simplified presentation of the Rig Vedic assertion of 'ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti' meaning, 'The truth is one, only named differently, by the wise ones'.

Further, Swami Vivekananda did not set any preference for himself concerning his audience. His audience comprised of all people, believers, non-believers, curious listeners and so on. One of Swamiji's admirers gave an account of his audience in the following words:

> "In the beginning, crowds of people flocked to his lectures. But they were not of the kind that a teacher of religion would be pleased to have for his auditors. They consisted partly of curiosity-seekers who were more interested in the personality of the preacher than in what he had to preach, partly of the representatives of the cranky and fraudulent elements mentioned before, who thought they had found in the Swami a proper tool to forward their interests." (The Christian Literature Society for India vi-vii)

Thus, Swami Vivekananda's simple and unbiased approach to mass communication moulded in the Indian tradition of communication established him as an effective mass communicator.

Swami Vivekananda as a Group Communicator:

While Swamiji's "public addresses at first were well attended, but when curiosity was satisfied, his audiences seem to have declined. Thereafter, he worked chiefly through more private meetings—classes and societies." (The Christian Literature Society for India vii) Thus, Swami Vivekananda was wise enough to realize that the effects of his public addresses

could have a sustained and prolonged bearing in the minds of his audience only if he could establish a more interactive and engrossing mode of communication with them. Therefore, he switched to informal modes of communication such as private meetings when he found the effect of his public addresses diminishing. Regarding Swamiji's group communication skills, Swami Nikhilananda recalled:

> "In his lectures and conversations the Swami showed a wonderful sense of humour. It was a saving feature in his strenuous life, and without it he might have broken down under the pressure of his intense thinking. Once, in one of his classes in Minneapolis, the Swami was asked by a student if Hindu mothers threw their children to the crocodiles in the river. Immediately came the reply: 'Yes, Madam! They threw me in, but like your fabled Jonah, I got out again!' Another time, a lady became rather romantic about the Swami and said to him, 'Swami! You are my Romeo and I am your Desdemona!' The Swami said quickly, 'Madam, you'd better brush up your Shakespeare.'" (Nikhilananda 191)

While not much is known of Swami Vivekananda's expositions during his brief stay in England, it may be assumed that Swamiji continued with his unconventional yet effective mode of communication with his diverse audience. That Swami Vivekananda optimally utilised the tools of humour and wit in group conversations is evident from Swami Nikhilananda's following observations:

> "At one of the meetings, at the close of his address, a white-haired and well-known philosopher said to the Swami: 'You have spoken splendidly, sir, but you have told us nothing new.' Quick came the Swami's reply: 'Sir, I have told you the Truth. That, the Truth is as old as the immemorial hills, as old as humanity, as old as creation, as old as the Great God. If I have told you in such words as will make you think, make you live up to your thinking, do I not do well in telling it?' Loud applause greeted him at the end of these remarks. The Swami was quick in repartee. During the question period a man who happened to be a native of Scotland, asked, 'What is the difference between a baboo and a baboon? 'Oh, not much,' was the instantaneous reply of

> the Swami. 'It is like the difference between a sot and a Scot — just the difference of a letter.'" (Nikhilananda 213)

Thus, Swami Vivekananda earned much accolades as a group communicator owing to his interactive, engrossing and witty mode of communication with his communicatees. In the present age of 'new media'[3] facilitated by digital communication systems, the social media has emerged as the preferred platform of group communication among the masses. However, an advanced communication system alone cannot ensure the fruitfulness of communication involved. It requires the desired 'communication quotient' to be a successful communicator within one's peer circle or 'group' which Swami Vivekananda possessed and effectively utilised in group communication situations.

Swami Vivekananda as an Interpersonal Communicator:

Swami Vivekananda wrote a volume of letters to various individuals which are available in the public domain. These letters give us a peek into Swami Vivekananda's skill and effectiveness as an interpersonal communicator. As an interpersonal communicator, Swamiji framed his messages uniquely for different individuals according to the situation and context of the conversation. An interesting feature of Swamiji's letters to any student of communication is the importance he accorded to detailed observations. A classic example of the same is the letter he wrote to Swami Ramakrishnananda on April 27, 1896.

In the letter, "he sent instructions about the daily life of the monks, their food and clothing, their intercourse with the public, and about the provision of a spacious library at the monastery, a smaller room for interviews, a big hall for religious discussions with the devotees, a small room for an office, another for smoking and so on and so forth. He advised them to furnish the rooms in the simplest manner and to keep an eye on the water for drinking and cooking. The monastery, he suggested, should be under the management of a President and a Secretary to be elected by turns by vote. Study, preaching, and religious practices should be important items among the duties of the inmates. He also desired to establish a math for women directly under the control of the Holy Mother. The monks were not to visit the women's quarters." (Nikhilananda 219)

Thus, Swamiji had a keen eye for details and communicated what was called for without any inhibitions. It is also interesting to note that how Swami Vivekananda took care to moderate his expressions suitably in accordance with the situation and the communicatee(s). Given below is reproduced a letter written by Swami Vivekananda to the Hale sisters, dated July 26, 1894, that serves as an example in this regard.

> "Now, don't let my letters stray beyond the circle, please — I had a beautiful letter from Sister Mary — See how I am getting the dash — Sister Jeany teaches me all that — She can jump and run and play and swear like a devil and talk slang at the rate of five hundred a minute — only she does not much care for religion — only a little....Darn it, I forget everything — I had duckings in the sea like a fish — I am enjoying every bit of it — What nonsense was the song Harriet taught me, 'Dans la Plaine' — the deuce take it! — I told it to a French scholar and he laughed and laughed till the fellow was wellnigh burst at my wonderful translation — That is the way you would have taught me French — You are a pack of fools and heathens, I tell you — How you are gasping for breath like huge fish stranded — I am glad that you are sizzling (Referring to the summer heat of Chicago.) — Oh! how nice and cool it is here — and it is increased a hundredfold when I think about the gasping, sizzling, boiling, frying four old maids — and how cool and nice I am here — Whoooooo!!!...

Well — dear old maids — you sometimes have a glimpse of the lake and on very hot noons think of going down to the bottom of the lake — down — down — down — until it is cool and nice, and then to lie down on the bottom, with just that coolness above and around — and lie there still — silent — and just doze — not sleep, but a dreamy, dozing, half unconscious sort of bliss — very much like that which opium brings — That is delicious — and drinking lots of iced water — Lord bless my soul! — I had such cramps several times as would have killed an elephant — So I hope to keep myself away from the cold water —

> May you all be happy, dear fin de siecle young ladies, is the constant prayer of Vivekananda." (Nikhilananda 192-193)

With regards to the particular letter, Swami Nikhilananda writes:

> "One realizes how deeply Swami Vivekananda had entered into the American spirit, when one sees how facile he was in his use of American slang. Surely this letter is an example. As we have stated before, the Swami also needed diversions of this kind in order to obtain relief from his intensely serious life and thinking in America. One recalls that Sri Ramakrishna, too, would often indulge in light talk in

> order to keep his mind on the level of ordinary consciousness." (Nikhilananda 193)

Thus, Swami Vivekananda moulded himself effectively in different situations and framed his messages accordingly. This trait is particularly important in interpersonal communication because different communicatees are bound to have different preferences and expectations from the communicator. At the same time, it does not mean that the communicator should conceal his thoughts or go soft on facts and details. The first reference to the letter written to Swami Ramakrishnananda is a good example of the same.

Swami Vivekananda's Communication for Development Vision:

Having stayed in the West for a little less than three and a half years (1893-1896), Swamiji returned to India with a mind "full of ideas regarding his future plan of work in his motherland" (Nikhilananda 246). But then, how to "awaken the masses of India from the slumber of ages" (Nikhilananda 252) was everyone's question. Swamiji addressed this concern in the following words in his public lecture entitled 'My Plan of Campaign' delivered during his short stay at Madras:

> "...my plan is to start institutions in India to train our young men as preachers of the truths of our scriptures in India and outside India. Men, men — these are wanted: everything else will be ready; but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted. A hundred such and the world becomes revolutionized. The will is stronger than anything else. Everything must go down before the will, for that comes from God: a pure and strong will is omnipotent." (Nikhilananda 258)

Having said so, Swamiji was quick to realize that his ideas could not be put to effective use unless he could establish a good organizational order of dedicated people that would focus on "the afflictions of the Indian people — the starvation of the masses, the humiliation of Hindu women, the ill-health and general suffering of the people everywhere" (Nikhilananda 268) and work steadfastly towards addressing them effectively. As Swami Vivekananda rightly identified, "[T]o make a great future of India, the whole secret lies in organisation, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills." (Nirvedananda 30)

But then, where could have Swamiji found the fellow workers to help him in this gigantic task? Swamiji knew exactly how to address this concern. In a letter to a friend, Swamiji wrote:

> "Suppose some disinterested sannyasins, bent on doing good to others, went from village to village, disseminating education and seeking in various ways to better the condition of all, down to the untouchable, through oral teaching and by means of maps, magic lanterns, globes, and other accessories — would that not bring forth good in time? All these plans I cannot write out in this brief letter. The long and short of it is that if the mountain does not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. The poor are too poor to go to schools; they will gain nothing by reading poetry and all that sort of thing. We, as a nation, have lost our individuality. We have to give back to the nation its lost individuality and raise the masses." (Nikhilananda 112-113)

That is exactly what he worked on upon coming back to India (Calcutta). As Swami Nikhilananda observed:

> "On May 1, 1897, Swami Vivekananda called a meeting of the monastic and lay devotees of Sri Ramakrishna at the house of the Master's intimate disciple Balaram Bose, for the purpose of establishing his work on an organized basis … he asked the co-operation of the monastic and householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna in order to organize the educational, philanthropic, and religious activities which he had already inaugurated, but which had hitherto been carried out in an unsystematic way. Further, the Swami declared that in a country like India, in its then current state of development, it would not be wise to form an organization on a democratic basis, where each member had an equal voice and decisions were made according to the vote of the majority ... the organization for the time being should be under the leadership of a 'dictator,' whose authority everybody must obey. In the fullness of time, it would come to be guided by the opinion and consent of others. Swami Vivekananda proposed to the members present that the Association should 'bear the name of him in whose name we have become sannyasins, taking whom as your ideal you are leading the life of householders, and whose holy name, influence, and teachings have, within twelve years of his passing away, spread in such an unthought-

> of way both in the East and in the West.' All the members enthusiastically approved of the Swami's proposal, and the Ramakrishna Mission Association came into existence." (Nikhilananda 268-270)

Speaking on the occasion of the Exhibition and Seminar in Commemoration of the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda's Appearance at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1893, Federico Mayor, the then Director-General of UNESCO said:

> "I am indeed struck by the similarity of the constitution of the Ramakrishna Mission which Vivekananda established as early as 1897 with that of UNESCO drawn up in 1945. Both place the human being at the centre of their efforts aimed at development. Both place tolerance at the top of the agenda for building peace and democracy. Both recognize the variety of human cultures and societies as an essential aspect of the common heritage." (Prabhananda, "Profiles of Famous Educators" 234)

A look at the efforts of the Ramakrishna Mission over the last century would reveal that the monastic order has successfully managed to live up to its purpose of service to mankind. This despite the fact that India as a whole has been plagued by various issues such as corruption, inflation, bureaucratic inefficiency and so on in the intermediary years. The question remains as to how come an organization that has shirked politics and political affiliations all the while managed to work so efficiently when similar initiatives by many other organizations have failed to make much ground? (Bhattacharyya, "Communication for Rural Development" 40)

Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that the Ramakrishna Mission Order has followed the unconventional but effective path of free-flowing 'heart to heart communication' instead of measured 'brain to brain communication' based on cause and effect relationship between the seeker and the sought. This 'heart to heart communication' has helped them in staying close to the masses and work actively at the grass root levels being responsive to the pulse of the nation's poor and deprived.

Besides, the members of the organization, i.e., the monks are sahṛdayas[4] sharing a common vision within themselves based on the principle of 'Śiva Jñane Jīva Sevā' as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda that calls for the unconditional service to humanity and actively working towards the same. The manner in which the organization has been

responsive to the plight of the poor and needy people of this nation is striking indeed and highlights how the organization had been a sahṛdaya of the masses since its inception just as its founder Swami Vivekananda had envisaged it to be. No wonder then, it has managed to achieve what many others have failed to do.

What strikes out the most is the far-sightedness of a communicator in planning his vision, in our case, Swami Vivekananda's vision of the rejuvenation and development of India, and the extent of effectiveness of his vision that has stood the test of time, space and causation, in our case, the effectiveness of the Order of the Ramakrishna Mission. This would have been impossible unless he had possessed the following essential qualities of a communicator working for social development:

1. A sound knowledge of the problem one wishes to address and the purpose he/ she seeks to achieve;
2. A sound knowledge and vision of the means of accomplishing the purpose, that of, addressing the problem concerned;
3. Actively working towards the means of accomplishing the purpose rather than preaching and being critical of the impediments on the path to the accomplishment of the same;
4. Ensuring that development efforts do not suffer from Dog's Tail Syndrome[5] through establishing a system that focuses on sustained empowerment of the masses over a continuous period of time.

That Swami Vivekananda verily possessed the first three qualities is clear from the discussion so far. More importantly, Swamiji was also able to ensure the sustenance of his vision of the rejuvenation and development of India through the establishment of an effective order such as the Ramakrishna Mission that has ably prevented the Dog's Tail Syndrome for over a century in the Indian paradigm through its sustained initiatives towards human empowerment actively and not mere short-term solutions. All these factors firmly establish that Swami Vivekananda was also an effective communicator working for social development.[6]

Swami Vivekananda - The Purposeful Communicator:

Throughout his life, Swami Vivekananda communicated with his audience with a distinct purpose and he accomplished his task to a telling effect thanks to the various qualities of a good communicator that he happened to possess. These include among others, a good

knowledge of the exact area of concern, conviction in what he said, preaching only what he himself practiced and judicious use of words in his conversations. Thus, Swami Vivekananda was a purposeful communicator. As Swami Nikhilananda observed:

> "He wanted to tell the West that the health of India and the sickness of India were the concern of the whole world. If India sank, the whole world would sink with her. For the outside world, in turn, needed India, her knowledge of the Soul and of God, her spiritual heritage, her ideal of genuine freedom through detachment and renunciation; it needed these in order to extricate itself from the sharp claws of the monster of materialism. Then to the Swami, brooding alone and in silence on that point of rock off the tip of India, the vision came; there flashed before his mind the new continent of America, a land of optimism, great wealth, and unstinted generosity. He saw America as a country of unlimited opportunities, where people's minds were free from the encumbrance of castes or classes. He would give the receptive Americans the ancient wisdom of India and bring back to his motherland, in exchange, the knowledge of science and technology. If he succeeded in his mission to America, he would not only enhance India's prestige in the Occident, but create a new confidence among his own people." (Nikhilananda 113-114)

Thus, Swami Vivekananda went to the West with a distinct vision and specific purpose, that of, taking the West by storm and establishing India's glory there and bringing back to his motherland 'the knowledge of science and technology' in exchange of 'the ancient wisdom of India' and he returned from the West only after having duly accomplished the task he had sought for. Upon his return to India, he continued with his vision of serving humanity and revival of India's glory by creating an organisation with a specific purpose. He knew exactly what he wanted out of the organisation and designed the organisation, the Order of the Ramakrishna Mission, accordingly.

As discussed earlier, a good communicator must have a good knowledge of the problem, the purpose, and the means of accomplishing the purpose. This, however, is extremely difficult unless he/ she is willing to be a good student of the situation which, in turn, calls for gathering in-depth knowledge about the overall situation from authentic sources with dedication and conviction.

Though Swami Vivekananda was fortunate to have received knowledge from the Divine One, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, he did not accept the Master's words at face value. When Swami Vivekananda first met Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, he had many reservations regarding the latter's views. He then listened to what the Master had to say, deeply contemplated on the assertions and only when he was firmly convinced, accepted the Master's idea. (Bhattacharyya, "Theory and Knowledge" 319) But once he accepted an idea, he made it his talisman and held on to it steadfastly.

Conviction in the communicator's mind is important to make an idea believable, convincing and acceptable to the audience. Unless an individual is himself convinced about an idea, how can one possibly convince the audience? In Swamiji's case, he could ably convince his audience because he himself was firmly convinced in what he wished to communicate with his audience, the message of universal brotherhood and peace as envisaged by the Master, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. This is yet another hallmark of an effective communicator that we find in Swami Vivekananda's approach to communicating with the masses.

Concluding Reflections:

Bharata Muni (Sage), in the Nāṭyaśāstra[7] emphasized upon the importance of four aspects in deciding the outcome of any human communication endeavour, these being:

1. Āṅgika: Aspects related to physical presentation, viz., personality, actions, gestures
2. Vācika: Aspects related to verbal presentation, viz., speech, sound
3. Āhārya: Aspects related to external appearance, viz., costumes, make-up
4. Sāttvika: Aspects related to the action of the mind, viz., human temperament

A study of Swami Vivekananda as a communicator gives us a practical demonstration as to how these four aspects of human communication contribute to effective communication. We know that Swamiji had a towering personality (āṅgika), he was a master of words (vācika) and his unorthodox yet simple dress (āhārya) drew considerable attention[8]. Besides, he was a man with a wonderful temperament (sattva) and it finds reflection in his assertions. As Swamiji himself observed, "The calmer we are, the better for us, and the more the amount of work we can do. When we let loose our feelings, we waste so much energy, shatter our nerves, disturb our minds, and accomplish very little work. The energy which ought to have gone out as work is spent as mere feeling, which counts for nothing. It is only when the mind is very calm and collected that the whole of its energy is spent in doing good work."

(Chidatmananda, "CW II" 293) Thus, Swami Vivekananda effectively combined the four key aspects of successfully communicating with one's audience as had been envisaged by the wise ancient Indian ṛṣis ages back.

The paramount importance of prudent use of communication skills in realizing the true potential of a human being and performing his dutiful role as a communicator in the society that he/ she is a part of was perfectly demonstrated by Swami Vivekananda. No wonder, he envisaged the goal of human life to be 'ātmano mokṣārtham jagat hitāya ca' (salvation of the self and welfare of the world). In this multi-dimensional motto is rooted the key to combining the seemingly opposite visions of individualism and collectivism which the modern-age communicators would do well to embrace in theory and practice.

The present paper has been a humble attempt by the researcher to bring to fore the communication acumen of Swami Vivekananda as reflected in his words and deeds. None-the-less, the work is too sketchy to present the subject completely. Yet it is hoped that it shall serve to establish Swami Vivekananda's rightful position as a role model for effective human communication or simply put, as a communicator par excellence.

Endnotes:

1 "The word 'communicatee' to the authors' understanding may be ably used in relation to the word 'communicator' in the English lexicon as is the case with the words, 'addresser' and 'addressee'. Thus, 'communicator' refers to 'the one who communicates' while 'communicatee' refers to 'the one to whom something is communicated'." (LohoChoudhury and Bhattacharyya 72)

2 Prof. U. S. Rukhaiyar in his article 'The Prose Style of Swami Vivekananda', written in two parts, has dealt in comprehensive detail upon the linguistic dexterity of Swami Vivekananda. Both the parts are available in the public domain. Similar attempts have been made earlier by Prema Raghunath and Prof. K. Panchapagesan. The details of these works are given in the Bibliography Section.

3 "New Media refers to the new-age communication platforms that exhibit a marked shift in the possible approaches towards establishing network 'with and within' the masses as compared to the conventional mass media forms such as the newspaper, the television and the radio. There is nothing specific about 'new' media. It is only the element of 'newness' that categorises a particular communication platform as 'new' or not. Thus, what is 'new' today will become 'old' when some upgraded communication platform will emerge in future. That upgraded communication platform will become the 'new media' at that particular point of time. As we have it today, the existing 'new media' forms before us hinge primarily on two basic elements: 'technological application' and 'information network processing'." (LohoChoudhury et al 27)

4 Sahṛdayatā refers to the acquired state of commonness in the hearts of both the communicator and the communicatee. A person who acquires sahṛdayatā is a sahṛdaya.

5 Dog's Tail Syndrome is the term coined by Prof. Biplab LohoChoudhury to "express the qualitative state of Indian peoples' development vis-à-vis development efforts of the country". It is "a condition in which so much may be the effort, once the force (here the money and the key-implementers from outside the community) is withdrawn, the entire effect almost vanishes". (LohoChoudhury 25)

6 For a comprehensive understanding of Swami Vivekananda's views on development, the readers may go through Swami Prabhanandaji's seminal work, *"Swami Vivekananda's Vision of Rural Development*", published from the office of the Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad, Narendrapur, Kolkata. (Prabhananda, "Swami Vivekananda's Vision")

7 The present researcher's doctoral dissertation has attempted to present the communication insights available in Bharata Muni's Nāṭyaśāstra in their contemporary relevance, thereby, seeking to establish the same as the earliest communication treatise of significant relevance available to us today.

8 The Christian Literature Society for India reported that Swamiji "judiciously varied his costume" (The Christian Literature Society for India iv) according to the occasion.

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Quine on the Dogmas of Empiricism

Madhusree Chatterjee

Abstract:

W. V. O. Quine, in his "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", puts to question the viability of the analytic-synthetic distinction and the reductionist theory of meaning. In course of his paper Quine has considered several attempts to explicate the notion of analyticity by kindred notions such as definition, synonymy or necessity, but each of such attempts, he demonstrates, is either circular or falls back on concepts, which are equally obscure. According to Quine, a proposition has both a linguistic component and a factual component; to assume that there are propositions which are devoid of factual component is to close eyes before ungrounded faith. This paper, while presenting Quine's argument, has also made an attempt to bring to surface some of the weaknesses involved in Quine's argumentation. In face of these weaknesses, the cogency of Quine's argument to refute the analytic-synthetic distinction or the verificationist theory of meaning stands to question.

Key Words: Analytic, Synonym, Definition, Intersubstitutability, Necessity, Verifiability, Reductionism, Holism

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Introduction:

W. V. O. Quine's famous article "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", as the very title suggests, falls into two parts: in the first four sections Quine's focus of attack is the analytic-synthetic distinction, where he examines the vagueness centering the notion of analyticity; while in the final two sections he scrutinises the logical positivists' verification theory of meaning— the theory that the meaningfulness of a statement consists in its being confirmed or refuted by experience. In his attempt to bring out the irrationality of the two main pillars of empiricism, Quine, in his article, aims at striking at the very root of logical positivism, the view that every meaningful statement is, on ultimate analysis, traceable to data of the senses.

This paper aims at bringing to light 'the two dogmas of empiricism' as christened by Quine, and thereby examine whether Quine's critique ultimately stands to reason. Accordingly, the paper is divided into three sections: in the first section, 'the first dogma' is presented; the second section presents 'the second dogma', while, in the final section some observations on Quine's critique are offered. The method followed in presenting this paper is analytic-critical.

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First Dogma & Quine's Critique Of Analyticity:

The western tradition of epistemology is founded upon a two-fold distinction of propositions, which has been variously termed by the rationalist Leibniz as 'truths of reason' and 'truths of fact', by the empiricist Hume as 'relation of ideas' and 'matters of fact' and by the critical philosopher Kant as 'analytic' and 'synthetic'. Keeping variations in terminology aside, all these philosophers believed that this distinction is fundamental and crucial as any form of knowledge is embodied in either of these two types of propositions. However, Quine dismisses the distinction with his claim that none of the philosophers fares better than the other in explicating the notion of analyticity. Quine presents the first dogma thus:

> …a belief in some fundamental cleavage between truths which are *analytic,* or grounded in meanings independently of matters of fact, and truths which are *synthetic*, or grounded in fact.[1]

The 'analytic-synthetic' cleavage was coined by Kant, and Quines thus begins by examining the Kantian notion of analyticity. Kant defines an analytic proposition as that in which the predicate concept is contained in the subject concept.[2] Kant cites as an example, 'All bodies are extended', for the idea of extension, according to Kant, is 'contained' in the idea of body. Quine raises two objections against such definition. Firstly, it limits analyticity strictly to statements of the subject-predicate form as if in a procrustean bed[3]; secondly, it makes use of the metaphor of containment, which demands as much clarification as the notion of analyticity. Thus, one might ask, in what sense does the concept of unmarried men is contained in the concept of bachelors? This containment criterion has been left unclarified by Kant. Kant further explicates the notion of analyticity as "Analytic judgements (affirmative) are therefore those in which the connection of the predicate with the subject is thought through identity"[4.] Therefore, for Kant, analytic statements are "…statements whose denials are self-contradictory"[5]. But this definition also scores no improvement as the notion of self-contradictoriness is as much in a need of clarification as the notion of analyticity itself. As Quine points out:

> The two notions are the two sides of a single dubious coin[6]

To explain, a self-contradiction, syntactically, is always of the form 'p &─p'. But such an explicit contradiction may not always be evident in a statement. Consider for example, the analytic statement,

S1: All bachelors are unmarried men

The denial of this statement yields,

S2: Some bachelors are married men

which evidently is not of the form 'p & ─p'. To bring out the contradiction in this statement we further need to appeal to the meaning of "bachelor" as unmarried men, and thereby arrive at an explicit contradiction,

S3: Some unmarried men are married men.

Evidently, the notion of analyticity depends on the notion of self-contradiction, which again depends on the notion of synonymy that stands in the need for further clarification. Thus we find, on Kant's characterisation of analytic truth, the notion of analyticity remains obscure.

While retaining the spirit of Kant, Quine further considers the logical positivist's version of analytic truth,

> …a statement is analytic when it is true by virtue of meanings and independently of fact.[7]

Having thus defined analyticity, Quine warns us of a possible confusion between meaning and naming, or in variant vocabularies, between connotation and denotation or extension and intention. 'The morning star', 'the evening star' and 'the planet Venus' for example, are co-extensive expressions, standing for the same object, yet they differ in meaning. That they are co-referential is a fact not known *a priori*, but is a fruit of an important astronomical discovery. Again, the general terms 'renate' and 'cordate' are co-referential, yet they differ in meaning, the former meaning, 'creatures with kidney' and the latter, 'creatures with heart'. Therefore, meaning of a word cannot be mistaken as its referent.

The notion of meaning is embedded in the Aristotelian notion of essence. The essence of a thing is that attribute of the thing without which it cannot be the thing it is. Thus a man is essentially rational and only accidentally biped. Following Aristotle, Quine observes, while essences belong to things, meanings are the linguistic counterparts of essences, explicating words. However, Quine is quick to point out that it cannot be decided arbitrarily of an individual, who is both a man and a biped, whether rationality or two-leggedness, is to count as his essence. The same individual can be both essentially rational and not essentially rational. In face of such sheer contradiction, the notion of meaning and thereby that of analyticity cannot be explained in terms of the notion essence. While

admitting that words and statements are meaningful, Quine is not, however, willing to admit meaning as separate ontological entity.

To free the notion of analyticity from the equally obscure concept of meaning, Quine moves on to consider a more modern account of analyticity. Analytic statements are of two types, a) statements which are logical truths and b) statements which can be converted to logical truths using synonymies and / or definitional identities. Quine defines a logical truth thus:

> …a logical truth is a statement which is true and remains true under all interpretations of its components other than the logical particles[8]

As an example of logical truth, Quine cites, 'No unmarried man is married', which is of the form 'No not-p is p' using the logical rule of double negation, we may further convert it to a statement of identity of the form 'All p is p'. The statement cited above remains true under every interpretation of its non-logical components viz. 'man' and 'married'. However, the statements of the second kind, for example, 'No bachelor is married', is not an explicit logical truth, but can be reduced to one by providing the synonym for 'bachelor' viz. 'unmarried man'. Therefore, analytic statements of second kind fall back on the notion of synonymy, which again stands in the need for further clarification. It is this kind of analytic statements that are problematic, according to Quine.

Quine also mentions of Carnap's account of an analytic truth[9], which is true in all 'state description' or assignment of truth values to atomic statements. However, this notion of analyticity though holds good of logical truths of formal language, fails to apply to the second kind of analytic statements of our natural language. Attempts have been made to reduce analytic statements of the second kind to logical truths by definitional identities. However, definition, or as Carnap suggests, explication, are but statement of synonyms of the definiendum. Hence definition or explication does not hold clue to the notion of synonymy or analyticity.

Two expressions, Quine further observes, are synonymous if and only if they are *intersubstitutable salva veritate.*[10] However, intersubstitutability of two synonymous expressions would depend on the richness of language—rich enough to contain modal adverbs like 'necessarily', which when applied to an analytic statement would always yield truth. For, 'renate' and 'cordate' are not necessarily co-extensional and hence *intersubstitutable salva veritate* for we can well imagine a world where there are creatures

with kidneys but no heart or vice versa. Therefore, to rule out cases of this sort the need for the adverb 'necessary' is felt. Quine proves his point with the help of the following argument:

S1. Necessarily all and only bachelors are bachelors.

This is clearly a logical truth. Now since 'bachelors' and 'unmarried men' are intersubstitutable *salva veritate*, by substituting 'unmarried men' for 'bachelors' we get the truth:

S2.Necessarily all and only bachelors are unmarried men

But to say that S2 is true is to say that the statement:

S3.All and only bachelors are unmarried men

is analytic, for all analytic statements are necessary truths, we may therefore, conclude that 'bachelor' and 'unmarried men' are cognitively synonymous, which is nothing but arguing in circle. The modal adverb 'necessity' is required in our language to avoid a possible confusion, as noted earlier, between meaning and naming, intension and extension. 'Bachelor' and 'unmarried man' are not only co-extensive but also synonymous, on the other hand, '9' and 'the number of planets' are only accidentally co- extensive, though they differ in meaning. Therefore, to rule out this possible confusion between extension and intension the adverb 'necessity' is required in a language. But to make use of the notion of necessity is to presuppose a prior understanding of analyticity. Therefore, Quine concludes two linguistic expressions are synonymous if and only if they are interchangeable *salva analyticitate*[11] i.e. the statement of identity of the two expressions is analytic. Thus we find attempts to explain analyticity in terms of synonymy ultimately depends on the notion of analyticity itself creating an "air of hocus-pocus".[12] We now proceed to consider the 'second dogma' as depicted by Quine.

Second Dogma & Quine's Critique:

In the final two sections of his article Quine invites us to consider whether the verification theory of the logical positivists holds the key to the problem of analyticity and thereby ultimately to the problem of meaning. According to the verification theory, as noted earlier, a statement is meaningful if and only if it is confirmable or refutable by experience.

On this theory, two statements are synonymous if and only if they are empirically verifiable by the same method. Given this notion of synonymy we can reformulate our understanding of analyticity as: a statement is analytic when it is synonymous with a logically true statement.[13]

As statement- synonymy depends upon the method of empirical verification, so Quine enquires into the relation between a statement and experience that would either confirm or refute it. According to radical reductionists, like Locke and Hume, every meaningful statement is or is reducible to direct reports about experience expressed in a sense-datum language. Reductionism claims that corresponding to each synthetic statement there is an array of possible sensory events the occurrence of any of them would confirm the truth of the statement and there is also another array of possible sensory events the occurrence of any of which would falsify the statement. This is also the claim of the verification theory of meaning. But Quine counters this claim by labelling reductionism as 'a dogma'. For, according to him, empirical statements are not verifiable, if at all, in isolation, but only as constituent of the body of knowledge, in which they occur. To put it in Quine's own words:

> … our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience not individually but only as a corporate body.[14]

The dogma of reductionism is at bottom intimately connected with the dogma of analytic-synthetic distinction. On the verification theory all statements are ultimately analysable to statements either about linguistic facts or about extra-linguistic facts. Analytic statements, being statements about linguistic components, are vacuous of any extra-linguistic, factual component and hence are immune to confirmation or refutation by experience, while, synthetic statements are analysable to factual components, which are confirmable by experience.

However, Quine calls this cleavage of statements into statements about linguistic component and statements about factual component "…an unempirical dogma of empiricists, a metaphysical article of faith"[15]. A body of knowledge has its dependence on language as well as on experience; all the statements in a well-defined system of knowledge are so connected that any revision in one would also condition revision in another. Therefore, a single statement cannot be judged in isolation on the basis of a single contrary experience. Thus by assuming a holistic approach towards knowledge, Quine destroys the very possibility of analytic-synthetic distinction and also of the verification theory of meaning.

Conclusion:

Rounding up, we find, having rejected Kant's formulation of analyticity due to its inherent short comings, Quine examines the logical positivists' version of analyticity by appealing to the notion of meaning, which directs us to the notion of synonymy or definition; definition turns out to be but a statement of synonymy, while synonymy in its turn requires a prior understanding of analyticity. Through his scrutiny of the notion of analyticity Quine thus seeks to prove that all attempts to characterise analyticity are either unclear themselves or depend overtly or covertly on other notions which are no clearer than analyticity itself. Moreover, Quine classifies analytic statements into logical truths and truths that are ultimately reducible into logical truths. Quine's objections are directed against the second class of analyticstatements; however, it may be pointed out that the same charges may be brought against logical truths as well. To explain, Quine defines logical truths as statements that remains true under all interpretation of it component terms; interpretation means assignment of meaning, meanings means statement of synonymy and synonymy again presupposes the notion of analyticity as illustrated above, so the problem raised by Quine infects the apparently unproblematic logical truths as well. Consider further the logical truth, 'All national banks are banks', here the word 'bank' being a homonym, may be used in two different senses, viz., a river bank and a financial institution. Unless the two occurrences of the word 'bank' are used synonymously, falsity would be generated. Thus we find Quine's attack on analyticity may be directed against his own definition of logical truth.

Finally, Quine's critique though prima facie directed against the notion of analyticity, but a little reflection on Quine's account would reveal that it is more properly a critique against our common understanding of meaning. Meaning is concerned with language, linguistic truths, while facts are about how things are in the extra-linguistic world. To undo the distinction between analytic- synthetic statements is to question the very distinction between fact and meaning. Therefore, Quine's account, in my understanding, is counterintuitive. I hereby draw line to my discussion with the observation that in face of Quine's objection we must not altogether do away with the theory of meaning, or notion of analyticity, but should rather search for a more adequate theory free from the difficulties as pointed out by Quine.

Endnotes:

1. Quine, W.V.O., "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", *From A Logical Point Of View,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980. p.20, Print.
2. Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. Norman Kemp Smith, London: Macmillan Co. Ltd, 1929. p.48, Print.
3. In Greek mythology, Procustes was a notorious smith and bandit who attacked people by stretching them or cutting off their legs, so as to force them to fit the size of an iron bed. The word "Procustean" is used to describe situations where properties are made to fit to an arbitrary standard.
4. Kant, *loc.cit.*
5. Quine, *loc cit.*
6. *Ibidem.*
7. *Ibid.*p.21.
8. *Ibid.* pp. 22-23.
9. *Ibid.*p.23.
10. It is a Latin word meaning two expressions are synonymous if substitution of one for the other does not change the truth value of context in which either of the expressions may occur.
11. Quine, *op cit.*p.32.
12. *Ibid.*p.29.
13. *Ibid.*p.38.
14. *Ibid.* p.41.
15. *Ibid.*p.37.

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Swadeshi 'Bhandar' in colonial Bengal during the phase of 'economic nationalism'

Prithwiraj Biswas

Abstract:

While the tumultuous anti-partition movement in Bengal has been the subject of numerous scholarly studies, yet swadeshi advertisements with its diverse features have largely remained outside such study.[1] This was indeed unfortunate since such advertisements reflect a fascinating period of commercial propaganda, and provides insights into how indigenous advertisers negotiated this phase of economic nationalism. Of particular significance is the information that many of these advertisements provide and thus proves to be an invaluable source that informs not only existing scholarship on swadeshi but also socio-political history of Bengal. The essay that follows looks at swadeshi stores, in the days of 'political swadeshi' in Bengal and observes that these stores were not just 'bhandar' in the typical sense of the term, but whose role, so long these were operational went beyond mere stocking and vending of swadeshi commodities.

Key Word: advertisements, stores, swadeshi, initiative, role

> 'At present those who want to purchase swadeshi goods do not know where to go to. Those who want to sell them do not know where to send them in.'[2]

While the tumultuous anti-partition movement in Bengal has been the subject of numerous scholarly studies, yet swadeshi advertisements with its diverse features have largely remained outside such study.[3] This was indeed unfortunate since such advertisements reflect a fascinating period of commercial propaganda, and provides insights into how indigenous advertisers negotiated this phase of economic nationalism. Of particular significance is the information that many of these advertisements provide and thus proves to be an invaluable source that informs not only existing scholarship on swadeshi but also socio-political history of Bengal. The essay that follows looks at swadeshi stores, in the days of 'political swadeshi' in Bengal and observes that these stores were not just 'bhandar' in the typical sense of the term, but whose role, so long these were operational went beyond mere stocking and vending of swadeshi commodities.

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While efforts to popularize and develop indigenous products were part of the economic agenda of nationalists, outlets also had to be created to ensure that these got sold. Evidence suggests that much before the inauguration of the Indian Industrial Exhibition, there had been sincere efforts initiated by some nationalist minded individuals in Calcutta to open stores or outlets to sell indigenous products. One of them was the 'Swadeshi Bhandar' or indigenous store which was set up by Rabindra Nath Tagore. The advertisement of 'Swadeshi Bhandar,' which was opened at 82 Harrison road, Calcutta stated that the Bhandar was "an emporium of Indian arts and manufactures started by some patriotic gentleman of high position to encourage and assist Indian Industries and to induce the people to use homemade articles managed by young man of education and culture."[4] This was however a short-lived enterprise. Not much is known about the initiative but according to Sumit Sarkar, these initial efforts aimed to establish a regular sales machinery of swadeshi goods.

Advertisements of similar ventures during the period establish that the trend was slowly picking up. One of the most popular and successful, the 'Indian Stores Limited' (henceforth Indian Stores) was inaugurated on 22nd September, 1902. The store located at 62, Bow Bazaar Street was established with a capital of Rupees five lakhs raised from the sale of 5000 shares. The directors comprised of princes and aristocrats as well as notable gentlemen of repute.[5] The 'Bank of Calcutta' functioned as its official banker. An advertisement claimed that the store was a one stop shop, 'Where all kinds of articles of Indian manufacture (were) ...kept for sale on retail and wholesale scale.'[6] During the Durga Puja festivities, the appeal to the public was to, "Give the Stores the first trial for…Poojah Purchases' claiming further that it was, "The Cheapest Place for country made things."[7] Other advertisements of the store reminded the people of their patriotic duty; "Remember thy country in all thy Purchases".[8] For the convenience of customers living in the northern parts of the city and also enthused by positive response, a second branch was also opened at 227 Harrison Road, Barrabazar within a year.[9] A third branch was also operational at Hornbey Road, Bombay by then.[10]

However, the role played by the Indian Stores during the period of economic nationalism was much more than just selling Swadeshi goods. It offered to transport and display samples (of products) of indigenous firms intending to participate in the various industrial exhibitions held in the country. This service was offered in exchange for a fee and was particularly extended to those manufacturers who were unable to take their exhibits or represent their firm at these exhibitions. The idea met with a great response for not only from Bengal, but exhibitors from outside the province also entrusted their exhibits to the Indian

Stores. In fact some of these firms went on to win awards for their manufacture.[11] Had not the Indian Stores taken the responsibility of taking the exhibits of these firms, the prize winners would have remained unrecognized.[12] Their unique initiative in this regard earned accolades from the highest quarters. In the Madras India Industrial Exhibition (1903)[13] for example, the Governor of Madras appreciated the store' unique service to fellow exhibitors.[14] Incidentally, the Indian Stores also won prizes for its excellent products; not only in the Madras exhibition but also in the Tangail exhibition the same year.[15]

The store posted profits during the heydays of swadeshi, giving dividends of 6% to shareholders[16] and bonus equivalent of one month's pay to the staff during the Durga Puja.[17] In 1904 it 'sold articles of Indian Manufacture to the extent of two lakhs of rupees, the bulk of which was contributed by sale of cotton fabrics of finer counts' meant for the middle class.[18] The diverse role of the Indian stores was also seen by the way it advised the public, guiding shoppers about purchases. One advisory stated, "The stock of fine mill-dhoties is very small in the bazaar and the prices very high and it is advisable not to go in for fine 'dhoties' at present."[19] The store also requested shopkeepers to contribute to the swadeshi cause by keeping very slender margins to benefit the common man; for example the shopkeepers were requested to keep a one anna profit for a pair of *saris* and two annas for a pair of *dhoties*.[20] This move ultimately entailed loss for traders and was one of the limitations of the system even though the motive was noble. The stores sold goods at minimum margin yet made gross profits of Rs.4000 in 1905 which allowed the directors to give dividends of six and a half percent to shareholders.[21] Regular advertisement of the store appealed to everyone from, 'Princes down to Peasants' to continue patronizing it so that it could continue offering its laudable services.[22]

But perhaps the most ingenious of such stores was the 'Lakshmi's Bhandar, or Indian Stores For Indian Ladies.'[23] Conceived by Sarala Devi Ghosal, or Sarala Devi, the niece of Rabindra Nath Tagore and editor of the popular journal *The Bharati*, the aim of establishing the store was evident from a letter to the editor of *The Bengalee*. Her aim, she wrote was, "…to establish an agency and store for Indian Ladies …. (and) to keep there a small stock of as well as a complete set of samples of articles of Indian manufactures from the earthen pots and pans of everyday use to the most luxurious kinoooba or cloth of gold as required in the domestic economy of … Griha Lakshmis." The letter continued "Some deserving lady will be employed as superintendent assisted by destitute girls of gentle birth for whom this will be a means of providing. This object may be furthered achieved by keeping on sale needlework,

embroidery….preserves made by Indian ladies. Zenana ladies will be able to call personally to inspect the samples as per catalogue or send their orders and instructions by letter." She wrote further that in her observation Indian "…. ladies are anxious to exclusively use products of Indian manufacture, but the all-pervading European articles displaces so easily the indigenous ones which even with the greatest trouble, are difficult to get…It is to meet this difficulty that the Lakshmi's Bhandar is being organised."She appealed in her letter to her "Indian sisters" to compile and send her lists of articles available in the district where they resided along with their prices and 'other necessary particulars' 'so that the store may be equipped with a complete assortment of indigenous products" She also provided a list of articles to help them in their inquiry regarding products of their locality. From an advertisement published after it commenced its business, it was seen that the Bhandar had three different 'department' keeping in mind a variety of products. The 'Industrial' where all Indian goods were sold at 'mill and manufacturer's price', the 'Agricultural' which kept foodstuff and edibles and the 'Tailoring and Outfitting' department which catered to the tailoring needs of ladies.[24] The shop had dedicated timings for the privacy of ladies which was from 11am till 4pm; and for gentlemen from 7am to 11am and after 4pm till 8pm so that timings did not overlap. While the store was located at 7 Cornwallis Street, the stockroom was located at 127, Cornwallis Street. Lakshmi's Bhandar should be acknowledged as the pioneer commercial venture aimed at the social and economic emancipation of women. While most of these stores never addressed the women directly, here was an example which was of, by and for women in its entirety.

Two years later, the Bhandar was incorporated under the Company's Act and transformed into a limited company. From an advertisement it was seen that it had sought application for 4000 shares of Rs.25 each. To ensure maximum sale of the shares and enable people with modest means to be a part of the project, installments facility was provided. 'Rs.10 on application, Rs.5 on allotment, and the balance Rs.10 in two installments of Rs.5 each on one month's notice for each call.'[25] A board of director was formed and the whole affair was handed to a managing agent K.B.Sen & Co, located at 5 Clive Street. The Bankers to the firm was Allahabad bank Ltd, and in legal matters, a solicitor, Babu Ambika Charun Dey was also appointed. The stated objectives of the Bhandar was, 'to collect on as large a scale as possible articles of Indian art and Manufactures suited for the present needs of the Indian public and to offer them for sale at prices suitable both for ordinary customers and *bona fide* traders'[26].

By 1905, many other stores were reported to have opened in various part of the province. From a report it is known that Babu Satyananda Banerji, a young Zemindar of Telenipara village had opened a swadeshi store named 'Bharat Bhandar' for the supply of swadeshi goods to people of the locality.[27] The city too witnessed the opening of other, 'grand emporium of country made goods.' One of them was located at 108-1, Grey Street under the patronage of Babu Bhupendranath Bose.[28] Another was 'The Assam Bengal Store,' located at 2 Lall Bazaar Street, advertising fresh consignment of goods like writing tools of various type and silk and cotton ties which were 'pure hand works of Indian ladies.'[29] Again, in an advertisement captioned, "The Swadeshi Movement,' P.Mitter, the Director of 'The Swadeshi Bureau' appealed to all swadeshi firms in India to write to him along with their details so that the same could be compiled and published in a swadeshi directory. However, there was a condition; firms were also requested to furnish relevant answers to some questions[30] which were published in the same advertisement. The idea was to determine the extent to which firms were truly swadeshi, so that only genuine dealers of swadeshi goods made it to the list.

Existing scholarship on swadeshi do not shed much light about the activities of most of these store or how long these continued in business.[31] Advertisements however help us get some idea about the Indian Stores, which by 1909 was appealing to the sentiments of the public, reminding how the store had played a vital role in the crucial days of swadeshi movement ensuring supplies even while sustaining losses.[32] By 1914, the management of the store had changed hands and the advertisements became less regular. The last advertisement released by the firm as seen in the *Bengalee*, requested countrymen with a patriotic appeal, "Don't throw money into enemy pockets use Indian made articles."[33] These appeals did not help its fortunes in any way for just like the other stores which had 'sprang up overnight,' to use the words of Sumit Sarkar, in the wake of political swadeshi, these early initiatives could not be sustained itself for long.

Most of the swadeshi stores were set up with nationalistic sentiment; profit was not primary motive of the organisers. However capital was a major problem as seen by the manner funds had to be raised from the market. Another problem was perhaps a lack of professional approach and a drive to sustain the enterprise in a competitive market. Under the circumstances it was not possible to sustain these enterprises for long…..even with the best of intentions.

Endnotes:

1 The only exception is Amit Bhattacharya (2007)

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2 Excerpt from Surendranath Banerjea's speech during the inauguration of the third Swadeshi Mela

3 The only exception is Amit Bhattacharya (2007)

4 The Bengalee, 13th October, 1900. See Sumit Sarkar, The Swadeshi movement in Bengal, People's Publishing House,1973,p.116

5 Maharaja Bahadur of Mymensing, Maharaja Bahadur of Kassimbazar, Babu R.N.Mukherjee, Sita Nath Roy et al.

6 The Bengalee, 19th September, 1902

7 ibid

8 The Bengalee, 19th March, 1903

9 The Bengalee,17th July, 1904

10 The Bengalee, 18th August, 1904. The Bombay branch closed down within a year due to operational costs.

11 Gold medals were won by the Bengal Soap Factory of Calcutta and the North West Tannery Co.Ld of Cawnpur. Silver Medals were won by, Cawnpur Wollen Mills Co, D.S Bhattacharya of Behrampore (for his silks); Ghosh Dass and Co (for locks); Kaiser Soap Co, Cawnpur (for soaps); U. Roy, Calcutta (for half-tone blocks); J.P.Ganguly Calcutta (for paintings) etc.

12 Though some like U.Roy was already well known for his half tone blocks by then.

13 The Bengalee, 15th November,1903

14 The Bengalee,7th January, 1904

15 The Bengalee, 19th November,1903

16 The Bengalee, 18th August, 1904. Which was not bad considering Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceutical Limited paid dividends of 5% for three consecutive years and only in 1904 gave 6%. (12.08.1905)

17 The Bengalee, 2nd August, 1905

18 ibid

19 The Bengalee,1st October,1905

20 Ibid, 1st oct,1905

21 The Bengalee, 6th September, 1906

22 The Bengalee, 22nd September, 1906

23 Quoted as it appears see, The Bengalee, 23rd May, 1903

24 The Bengalee, 7th July, 1904

25 The Bengalee, 25th July, 1906

26 Ibid

27 The Bengalee, 12th October, 1905

28 The Bengalee, 13th September, 1905

29 The Bengalee,19th June,1909

30 Some of the information the firms were asked to furnish were; to what extent were the goods dealt by the firms indigenous, to what extent was Indian labour and capital utilized, how the indigenous goods were procured, price list of goods the firms dealt with etc. The questions are interesting since it gives us an idea about contemporary expectations from true dealers of swadeshi. The Bengalee, 17th August, 1905

31 See for example, Sumit Sarkar (1973) or Amit Bhattacharya (2007)

32 The Bengalee,16th October, 1909

33 The Bengalee, 30th August,1914

Swami Vivekananda's Attitude Towards Religion

Saikat Bandyapadhyay

Abstract:

In recent times some people say the world devoid of the necessity of religion. For religion has become the most potent force of conflict and disintegration. If we look back to history, we would surely find ample of evidence of hostilities in the name of institutional religion. Even present national and international scenario provides plentiful evidences of conflicts caused by religion. But true religion is a binding force of unity and integration. The paper, following Swami Vivekananda, glimpses, at the true nature of religion. Vivekananda shows that religion is a 'constitutional necessity' and is nothing but expression of implicit divinity, a search for the infinite. So religion cannot be observed from narrow institutional standpoint. Religion ought to be universal to accept the 'Truth' in all the religions. Such attitude would aim at universal brotherhood and global peace. Hence, fighting shy of conventional rites we should stick to 'Universal Religion'.

Key Words: Religion, Divinity, Infinite, Universal Religion, Ātman

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Full Paper:

Ordinarily it is said that religion makes division. It separates one from the other belonging to different religions. But Vivekananda does not advocate such kind of religion. Religion, as advocated by Vivekananda, has a different significance and connotation. He opines, 'Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man'. But the question is – if religion is the manifestation of the innate divinity in man, why does disharmony exist on the earth in the name of religion. Vivekananda thinks that the root cause of communal disharmony or discord in the name of religion is simply ignorance of other religions and a wrong attitude towards own religion. 'My religion is right and yours is wrong' is the slogan that has divided mankind into warring groups by compartmentalizing them.

Clearly Vivekananda has a different approach towards religion. In the very first volume of his Complete Works there is a lecture entitled 'What is Religion?' At the end of his lecture Vivekananda says, 'My Religion means expansion and expansion means realization and perception in the highest sense… Man is to become divine, realizing the

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divine more and more from day to day in an endless progress.'[1] This lecture is delivered before Ethical society, Brooklyn. But the question sustains what does Vivekananda mean by 'the divine'? R.K. Dasgupta formulates his observation in this context. Dasgupta points out, "In the lecture 'What is Religion?' he makes a lucid statement on the divine. He states that it is a Universal Infinite One; it is the Spirit which is Infinite. 'God is spirit, infinite, man is spirit and therefore, infinite and the infinite alone can worship the infinite.' But we may not understand the significance of the words 'Spirit' and 'Infinite' so well. The things they signify may not be a part of our experience. And we know not what is within our experience. But Vivekananda says that even we ordinary men and women often have a sense of the spirit when material world fails us, when what is finite repels us and creates in us a yearning for the Infinite."[2]

It is true that we visit a temple or go on a pilgrimage when our usual surrounding fails to give us pleasure. We wish to shun the world of finitude and go towards the infinite. He further believes that every form of religion is an attempt to go beyond finite or world of senses. He states, ' The infinite is trying to express itself in the finite, but there will come a time when it will find that it is impossible, and it will then have to beat a retreat, and this beating a retreat means renunciation which is the real beginning of religion'.[3]

So the journey of religion, according to Vivekananda, lies in the search for the beyond, or in transcending the limitations of the finite or world of senses. He further advocates that wherever man is, he must develop such kind of belief; he must develop his religious nature. That is why Vivekananda says, 'Religion is constitutional necessity of human mind'.

The same idea is expressed by G. Watts Cunningham as follows:

> Mankind is incurably religious. Whenever on the face of the earth man is found and whatever level of human civilization he may happen to be, he commonly has his religious beliefs and practices.[4]

Will Durant substantiates this statement by telling: 'Suppress all religions from a country, then take off the lid, and religion would grow within a year'.[5]

So, as Vivekananda thinks, Religion has a great relevance to human progress. It is the highest motive power. He says, 'In building character, in making for everything that is good and great, in bringing peace to others and peace to one's own self, religion is the highest motive power and, therefore, ought to be studied from that standpoint. Religion must be

studied on a broader basis than formerly. All narrow limited, fighting ideas of religion have to go'.[6]

We find an all-comprehensive picture of religion in Swami Vivekananda. The religion he preaches is neither sectarian nor exclusive. It is all-inclusive, encompassing all aspirations of man, applicable in all fields of human activities. It embraces the entire areas of knowledge and its portal is wide open to all classes of people in the society. He speaks out, 'We reject none, neither theist, nor pantheist, nor monist, polytheist, agnostic nor atheist.' Therefore his religion is so vast as to embrace everyone and every activity of human. His religion is based on universal concept which is not just an intellectual construction, but also the outcome of universal love based on spiritual experience.

The purpose of religion is to take man out of all kinds of bondages, out of all limitations of race, cultures, language etc, and to bind the whole humanity with the chord of universal love. But, ironically, the very same religion limits human beings within the bounds of racial religion. The religious history of the world is a glaring witness to this fact. This is why Vivekananda desires a change in religious perspective. He once painfully remarked, 'My master (Sri Ramakrishna) used to say that these names Hindu, Christian etc, stand as a great bar to all brotherly feelings between man and man. We must try to break down first'.[7]

The most important aspect of Vivekananda's religion is, therefore, its universal approach. It encompasses all sectarian religions. It is for all individuals on earth irrespective of their class and caste. It is true that every religion has its own philosophy, mythology and ritual. This is also true that conflicts of religions arise from the difference of religions due to different philosophical concepts, mythological context and rituals. But Vivekananda advocates that a true religion must supersede all these petty differences and must seek to have universality with respect to all the religious paths. He firmly declares, 'When we come to the real, spiritual, universal concept, then, and then alone, religion will become real and living, it will come into our very nature, live in our every movement, penetrate every pore of our society and be infinitely more a power of good that it has even been before.'[8] But the question is --how can religion be really universal? How is such religion possible?

It is a historical fact that there have been various religions or religious organizations having different religious codes of belief. Islam, Christianity, Zoroasthrianism and the other religious sects existing with their own religious beliefs have been quarrelling against each other almost from the beginning. Each religious sect claims its exclusive right to live on its

own doctrine, considering the organizational superiority that each claims to have. The peculiarity about this is that, in spite of open and even bitter conflicts, most of the major religious sects have continued to survive. These conflicts, instead of weakening these sects, have added vitality to them.

This fact appears significant to Vivekananda. He believes that these conflicts are only apparent; these do not touch the essence of religion. In fact, Vivekananda admits that sects and conflicts have to be there. He asserts, 'It is the clashes of thought, the differentiation of thought, that awakes thought…whirls and eddies occur only in rushing, living stream. There are no whirlpools in stagnant, dead water'. [9]

Clearly he is of the opinion that study of different religions would generate the realization that variation is the sign of life. Difference is the first sign of thought. It would, therefore, not just to crush variation. Realizing this fundamental truth Vivekananda proclaims, 'I do not say that there are too many religions. Rather, I would welcome more religions'. He further affirms, 'Sects should have multiply so that, at least, there will be as many sects as human beings'.

But how can all these varieties be true at the same time? An answer to this question would determine the fate of a universal religion. A Universal religion, if really universal, must satisfy at least two conditions. First, it must open its gates to every individual. Secondly, a universal religion must be able to give satisfaction and comfort to every religious sect. After all, the universal religion has to supersede the conflicts of these sects, and therefore, must appear to be satisfactory and reasonable to all. We have seen that according to Vivekananda variety is required, that all these various minds and attitudes have to be there. Therefore, if there is going to be an ideal religion—a really universal religion, it must be broad and large enough to supply life-force to all these minds.

Vivekananda accepts that Universal religion is not only a matter of thought; instead, it is already there. Just as the universal brotherhood of man is there, although some men fail to notice it. So universal religion is there, some of us are not aware of it. We are lost so much in the external conflicts of religion that we fail to notice its essence and presence. But the question may be here—if such a religion is already there what can be its nature? Does it comprehend the common elements of all religions? Vivekananda opines that compilation of all religions is not possible. Islam, for example, lays emphasis on universal brotherhood, whereas Hinduism on spirituality, Christianity on self-purification. It is difficult to find any

common character in all these religions. Vivekananda is not dismayed by this because he recognizes the natural necessity of variation. By universal religion he does not mean a religion that will have one universal philosophy, or one universal mythology or one universal ritual. Religious concepts may all differ from sect to sect or even from individual to individual, and yet the universal religion is there because the outer difference cannot wipe out inner truth of unified oneness.

When Vivekananda talks of universal religion, we do not mean that all historical religions are to be rolled into one, nor that they are to be synthesized. That may be a wishful thinking, but it would never be a practical position. For, religion of a particular sect has its moorings in the tradition of the people, in their scripture or revealed texts, in their cultural surrounding etc. All these contribute to the very life of the particular religion. This is why you cannot put different religions in a lump, and say, 'Here is my universal religion'. Nor does Vivekananda does ever stand for such impossible synthesis. Synthesis logically implies that some elements are to be rejected and some others to be accepted. But what exactly is one going to reject in a religion? If anyone discards some propositions or themes of Hindu religion as obnoxious, certainly the Hindu will resent. And the same happen in regard to other sects, such as Christians, Muslims and Jains.

Vivekananda advocates that there are chiefly three things central to each and every religion—philosophy, mythology and ritual. All these go to make the warp and woof of a particular religion. These are so inter-woven that, if one discards any of these, the spirit of that religion will be destroyed. Vivekananda, therefore, does not want to discard any religion. Rather realizing the variation of religions and religious beliefs, he accepts all these from the core of heart. He has a large-heart to pay respect to other religions. So, the slogan of universal religion, according to Vivekananda, is acceptance. We must accept the 'truth' of all religions and that is the significance of universal religion. But that does not mean that we should have only tolerance for religious discourse. Tolerance is the word which Vivekananda hates most. It is a negative attitude, it debases one's soul. It is not, therefore, toleration that is desirable, but acceptance. That is why he says that he can even worship in any form of Almighty with any individual or sect. He says that he can offer his prayers anywhere, in a temple, or in a church, or in a mosque or at some other place. The believer in the universal religion has to be open-hearted; he would be prepared to learn from the Scripture of all the religions.[10]

Though Vivekananda suggests that we should to be prepared for acceptance of universal religion, yet he believes that it is not the final motto of his proclaimed religion. He

is of the opinion the final goal of universal religion must be the realization of Oneness. Men, women, animals and plants are all apparently different, but they are not actually different. They are One because the same divinity is present in all of them. Prof. Amiya Kumar Mazumder illustrates this point by saying, "The motto of universal religion may be. 'Whatever exists in this universe is pervaded by the Lord.' We can cover everything with God. We can see God in everything, in good and evil, in sin and the sinner, in happiness and misery, in life and death. 'If you have a wife', says Vivekananda, 'it does not mean that you are to abandon her, but that you are to see God in her. He is in her, in you, in your child. He is everywhere".[11] Thus universal religion, consciously or unconsciously, is struggling towards the realization of the God or the unity already in man. The oneness- existence of Ātman in everyone- builds up the abode of universal religion anywhere on the earth.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion we may conclude that Religion, as conceived by Swami Vivekananda, is neither ritual nor convention, nor formal worship or dogmatism, it is an enormous extension of heart that inspires us to work for all, unselfishly and unbound, in consonance with universal brotherhood without emphasizing caste, creed or so-called Religion and its status. Hinduism is for Hindus, Christianity for Christians, Islam for the Muslims, Buddhism for the Buddhists and so on, but Vivekananda's Religion is for all with an endless appeal for upsurge of the Self that would ultimately be revolutionary in helping man draw out the Divinity within him and the same lying dormant in the other.

Vivekananda, following his master Ramakrishna, says that the 'truth' in different religions and sects may be defined as 'universal religion'. Truth is one but the paths are different. If all the religions make a way to the same 'Truth', there should not be any difference. When the Hindu speaks of 'Ātman' in everyone, he actually speaks of universal brotherhood. Rituals of different sects may not have uniformity but the motto is same—the purity of heart, to stick to the truth and work unselfishly for all. So we should not make a quarrel between Ram and Rahim, rather look forward for setting up a platform of global unity to wipe out social injustice. When we would realize that there is actually no distinction among the creatures, we would refrain ourselves from attacking others or do harm to our neighbours. Religion is, therefore, a weapon to bring back social justice and make society rationally developed on the eternal basis of unalterable oneness of Soul.

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Relevance of Care Ethics in the Contemporary Social Situation

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Abstract:

Traditional ethics have emphasized virtues like abstraction, impartiality, detachment and universality, all of which are subsumed under the faculty of reason. Reason is the supreme guiding principle of knowledge. Based on such a principle, justice-based ethics appeared, which failed to identify other important virtues like contextuality, perspective, relationship and particularity. All these play a significant role in the moral understanding of a human being. Being aware of the exclusionary politics prevalent within the rigorous academic discourses, feminists began to talk about the emotional significance of individuals and the lived experiences of women. Thus, care ethics emerged which talks about the relational self, characterized by interdependence and responsiveness.

In this paper the rationalist model of Immanuel Kant has been used as an opponent to the feminist model. This paper tries to focus upon the relevance of care ethics vis-a-vis the traditional rationalist account of ethics and also intends to point out the importance of care ethics in the present situation. This paper will primarily deal with the effectiveness of working under a care ethics model irrespective of its disadvantages.

Key Words: care-based ethics, Carol Gilligan, justice-based ethics, reason, virtues.

Traditionalists Narrative:

Virtue may be defined as a trait or a quality which an individual tries to develop. A virtuous person follows those virtues which can result in a good moral life. Virtues like impartiality, autonomy, individuality, and detachment are looked upon with great reverence. Many philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Immanuel Kant and psychologists like Sigmund Freud and Lawrence Kohlberg have talked about the importance of these virtues. Hobbes, Locke as well as Jean Jacques Rousseau talk about the 'state of nature', where the laws are universal, absolute and context neutral in nature. The contract under this state of nature does not focus on mutual relationship among individuals in the society but creates distance among different individuals, Persons living under this contract uses the universal language of rights, justice and liberty, where he social aspect of individuals becomes negligible. To achieve 'autonomy' (freedom, self-rule and self-determination) under such a

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contract is highly valorized. Immanuel Kant points out that we respect people on the basis of their autonomy. We also need impartiality, where an individual disregards his/her emotions and attachments. Impartiality gives us a sense of duty and respect for the moral laws even when personal relationships are involved. Based on these virtues, develops an ethics called the justice-based ethics, which epitomizes reason and believes in the universal application of rules in any morally conflicting situation. Psychologists like Lawrence Kohlberg says that '… justice is a necessary element of any morally adequate resolution of these conflicts'[1]. Kohlberg's famous developmental model of children emphasizes upon becoming detached from others, to deliver moral judgments on the basis of universal moral prescriptions. Girls hardly feature here as they show less signs of detachment and are more inclined to the particularity of the context.

Like Kohlberg, Sigmund Freud is very definite about what constitutes the 'normal' development of a child. After distinguishing the developmental process of a boy child and a girl child, Freud takes the male developmental model as the paradigm case. The super ego of a male child shows the signs of detachment, autonomy and independence. The Oedipal crisis[2] offers a clear cut resolution in boys, where he identifies with the father, the source of authoritative power. The boy fears castration where his father can cut off his penis. Such a punitive measure is due to the fact that the mother becomes the love object of both the boy and his father. Whereas, in case of girls, the super ego is weak and confused. Her father is her love object and she tries to become like her mother. The complete detachment from the mother becomes impossible and thus, no clear resolution to the complex. Freud says that the girl does not experience any fear of castration (she has no penis) and develops a love-hate relationship towards her mother. Based on the development of super ego, Freud says that 'I cannot evade the notion (though I hesitate to give it expression) that for women what is normal is different from what it is in men. Their super ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal and so independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men'[3]. Both the sexes grow up differently but such differences are overlooked and are marked as deviant.

Both Freud and Kohlberg identify matured moral thinking with autonomy and separation, which is instantiated by boys alone. To develop a universal, rational and objective view point is only possible through separation. It becomes difficult for the girls to solve their complex successfully and for the boys the resolution is quite neat and successfully accomplished.

We can also take into account John Rawls' theory of justice, who like several traditionalists, stresses upon individualism and the maximum utilization of the rational faculty. Rawls talks about two principles of justice, firstly, the first principle is where each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive scheme of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for others and secondly, the second principle talks about the fair distribution of social and economic opportunities. These two principles would be accepted by any rational person in an 'original position of equality'. People have a veil of ignorance where one's position, caste, gender, sex, ethnicity remains invisible. This would ultimately lead to justice based on fairness. These principles face severe criticisms by feminists who question the negligence of differences among individuals and its over emphasis upon being impartial. Feminists do not disregard justice as a virtue but they simultaneously speak of other important factors like emotions, contextuality, lived experiences and so on. We need to realize the importance of connectivity, attachment and the fact that we are dependent upon each other. The ethics that many feminists promote is care-based ethics which is more gender-sensitive in nature. It highlights the social bonding between individuals. Our selves are relational and connected to one one another. Feminists point out that humans can also grow up as strong and matured individuals when they are connected to one another. It is not necessary to discard all kinds of emotional attachments. One can be in a relationship and at the same time exercise her autonomy. The justice-based model is not sufficient enough to provide a comprehensive account of moral development of both the sexes. It fails to include the uniqueness of the other sex (women). Women may fail to do abstraction or to apply universal rules; they may be more inclined to talk about rules that are more 'situational', where dealing of conflicts would be more care-oriented in nature. This gives rise to the need of an alternative model to accommodate women's needs and concerns, where feelings compassion, solidarity, sharing, lived experiences can be taken care of.

Though many feminists have formulated care based ethics but in the next section we will be talking about Carol Gilligan's care ethics, where she particularly attempts to embrace 'care' as central to moral actions.

Carol Gilligan and her Ethics of Care:

Carol Gilligan, an American psychologist, is the author of *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*[4]. In this book, Gilligan comments that the developmental procedure of both the sexes is different as well as unique. She notices that

women's voices are often suppressed, which can have an impact on women's moral development. Gilligan's care ethics talks about women's lived experiences, relationships, solidarity. She explains care ethics as 'in this conception, the moral problem arises from conflicting responsibilities rather than from competing rights and requires for its resolution a mode of thinking that is contextual and narrative rather than formal and abstract'[5]. Care ethics, thus, speaks the language of affection and attachment. Due to the internalization of the patriarchal norms, women have the fear of ostracization when they try to articulate their own desires and needs. As a result, their unheard voices are seldom accompanied by the readiness of their self abnegation and self- betrayal. Women's believe in maintaining relationships with others rather than making an exit. The patriarchal society disregards such emotional disposition of women. Gilligan has noticed women's different way of speaking. This she calls as a 'voice with a difference'. Gilligan opines that 'to have a voice is to be human. To have something to say is to be a person. But speaking depends on listening and being heard: it is an intensely relational act'[6]. Stressing upon this relational act, Gilligan holds relationships as a source of one's strength.

The belief in nurturing and in preserving of the relationships help Gilligan to posit a coherent model of moral development. Pointing out towards the sexist bias within the existent literature of psychology, Gilligan says that 'within the context of U.S. society, the values of separation, independence, and autonomy are so historically grounded, so reinforced by waves of imagination, and so deeply rooted in the natural rights tradition that they are often as facts; that people are by nature separate, independent from one another, and self-governing'[7]. Gilligan opposes this view by talking about women's different ways of approaching moral situations with their relational self, whose primary moral concern is to care about others. This self which gets its meaning/identity in terms of relation and connectivity with others, stands in stark contrast to that of the atomistic self, where detachment and being autonomous is important. Care ethics talks about relational autonomy, where one is independent yet attached to the other. It also supports listening to and of speaking with. This leads to care from the understanding of human nature and human interactions and constitutes one's core identity. Care plays a pivotal role within family where one receives care and extends it to the outer world. Denial of care in our life is impossible. This dynamic account of care and its value as a virtue are missing from the accounts of Kohlberg and Freud. Gilligan does not discard the framework of justice-based ethics but wants to include care within that framework. She

points out that the justice framework often excludes the lived experiences of women which is equally important in the developmental history of an individual.

Gilligan's moral developmental model is the outcome of Kohlberg's experiment where a hypothetical situation is provided to the participants. This involves a poor person named Heinz and his wife who was on the death bed. The respondents are asked whether he should steal the drug to save his wife or not. Boys solved it by adhering to the fair application of rules. Girls show their unwillingness to apply any rules and their unique way of solving the problem led Kolhberg to conclude that girl's morality is weaker than boys. The empathetic way of dealing the situation by the girls hardly finds any place within this experiment as it has not led to 'justice' which the boys have clearly achieved. The girls has shown their 'caring' responses, where care belongs in the private domain and justice in the public domain. Gilligan articulates that this kind of justice/care binary is difficult to maintain as the two overlap and we need both justice and care in order to promote one's well-being as well as that of others.

Care ethics has been seldom attacked by radical feminists who calls it to be an ethics exclusively for women, reinforcing the gender stereotypes of women as caring and nurturing. They claim that care ethics overtly romanticizes all the feminine qualities which patriarchy tries to support and maintain in order to serve its own interest. As a result, questions are raised regarding the relevance of such an ethics in the contemporary period. Gilligan has tackled these criticisms raised against her in *Joining the Resistance*[8] (JR). She has revised her claims with more vigor and intensity. In JR, she breaks the stereotype of associating men with justice and women with care. Gilligan says that 'voices' of both men and women are silenced. She includes both the sexes in her discourse and expands the ethical domain of discussion. Care has an universal appeal and is needed in everyone's life, irrespective of one's gender. Boys can also resist detachment. But due to the patriarchal pressure (culturally sanctioned and socially enforced), they cannot express their emotions. Caring, as an act, is not only limited to women and those who care are not necessarily doing any women's work. Men too have the tendency to take care of others. Gilligan dismisses such association of a caring voice with a specific gender and counters one of the major criticisms raised against her. In JR, Gilligan reinforces the fact that the voice of care (by women) and voice of justice (by men) complement each other, thus integrating care and justice in order to develop a more comprehensive ethics.

Gilligan posits her care ethics as a means to uphold the emotional aspect of human beings. Her ethics becomes an ethics of resistance (in JR) to those self-silencing and against those binaries supported by patriarchy. Within the democratic framework, Gilligan presents her care ethics as 'human ethics'. Care ethics would be humanitarian in nature when '… it can guide us by framing the struggle in a way that clarifies what is at stake and by illuminating a path of resistance grounded not in ideology but in our humanity'[9]. Care/Human ethics strives for humane values by resisting against the patriarchal norms. Such an ethics has its relevance in today's world where war prevails more than peace, where human beings feel more alienated in a globalized world. The need of an empathetic self, the need to care others should continue to exist which would help people to understand the language of love. To make the world a better place to live in, we need care/human ethics which would weave people together emotionally.

Endnotes:

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5 Gilligan, p.19, 1986.

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Dig-Durshun: Bengal's First Bengali Periodical

Saptarshi Mallick

Abstract:

Dig-Durshun was the first Bengali periodical by the Serampore Missionaries publishing instructive, literary, scientific or historical essays of general and academic interest (*Bengali Literature 1757 – 1857* 208) to educate the public. In this essay I aim to explore the issues of *Dig-Durshun* to vindicate its amazing range and variety of subjects which were published in the English and the Bengali languages as 'numbers' as 'Number I' till 'Number XVI' (Grierson 9) from April 1818 to March 1819 and from January to April 1820 while 'Number XV to Number XVI' was published only in the Bengali language within the time span from April 1818 to March 1819 'to stimulate a spirit of inquiry and diffuse information' (Marshman 2: 161) as *Dig-Durshun* aimed to spread knowledge among the young men of Bengal on several educative and informative topics, being 'secular' in the truest sense of the term.

Key Words: Bengal, Periodical, Bengali Language, Print Journalism, Serampore Missionaries

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William Carey (1761 – 1834), the first Protestant missionary from the Baptist Church of England arrived in India with an evangelical aim, but with the passage of time on being associated with the culture and people of Bengal his proselytizing perspective metamorphosed into an ecumenical pragmatism, an openness of vision (Daniel 171) initiating an intellectual and cultural assimilation (Kopf 51), and selfless service, along with the other Serampore Missionaries, to the people of Bengal in social, educational and religious spheres paving the way for the advent of the spirit of reawakening in nineteenth-century Bengal (Howells 118). The introduction of the art of printing in Bengal and the consequent birth of modern journalism facilitated the advent of a new era of 'wakefulness which can be compared to the European Renaissance' (Phillips 7), in the society and thought of the nineteenth-century Bengal leading to the germination of the public opinion through the proper dissemination of knowledge on political, social, educational and economic matters. The press therefore worked to transform a heterogeneous horde into a homogeneous nation

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for the growth of nationalism in India (Chakraborti 1, 12) as the editorials of the native news papers being unnoticed by the British authorities played an important role through 'the reiteration of their statements' (Douglas 185) to form and develop a public opinion among the masses. Literature cannot exist for the people till the advent of the newspapers take place and India was the first non-Christian country where the press was introduced (Smith 276) as the early newspapers in English in Bengal were run and edited by the Europeans (Chakraborti 3). The period from 1813 to 1833 is generally considered to be an unproductive phase in the history of Bengali literature but it was during this time of ideological conflict journalism served as the only incentive to Bengali literature, becoming the main platform for an effective propaganda (Bose 322). William Carey, Joshua Marshman, William Ward and John Clark Marshman took up the medium of newspapers, periodicals and journals in English and vernacular languages to reach up to the masses by stimulating a spirit of inquiry and to diffuse information (Marshman 2: 161) for their development through a process of cooperation and coordination, which not only facilitated a comparative adjustment of knowledge in the days to come but also ushered the people into an intellectual cooperation by opening out the new vistas of thought before the world (Tagore 50, 51). However there was not much progress due to the existence of the stringent restrictions on the press (*Bengali Literature 1757 – 1857* 207) - vehement after James Augustus Hicky of the *Bengal Gazette* or *Calcutta General Advertiser* was imprisoned in January 1780 (Chattopadhyay 360, 361; Kamal 7) by Warren Hastings (Mukhopadhyay 96). In spite of the prevalence of several press laws curbing its freedom the Serampore Missionaries played a pioneering role in fostering the development of the Indian press and journalism. Though they concentrated in printing and circulating pamphlets, periodicals and magazines for disseminating the 'Word' as the *Gospel Messenger* (Lalhmangaiha 116, 117), in February 1818 on Joshua Marshman's proposal of publishing *Dig-Durshun*, Carey extended his consent on the pretext that it would avoid discussions related to contemporary politics (*Bengali Literature 1757 – 1857* 207). This was perhaps the first initiative by the Serampore Missionaries to develop journalism in India by using the newspaper to educate and raise the social consciousness of the youth and make them aware of the happenings in India as well as abroad (Chatterjee 72) and confined to publishing instructive literary, scientific or historical essays of general and academic interest (*Bengali Literature 1757 – 1857* 208) to educate the public (Ahmad 80). Therefore with the publication of *Dig-Durshun* (Sen Gupta 130) the nature and character of journalism in Bengal took a new and a happy turn (Chakraborti 5). It perhaps paved the way towards the later germination of a new force which was destined to play a significant role in liberating India

from British political and economic imperialism (Ibid. 16). The minutes [February 13, 1818] of the first periodical publication in Bengali authenticate the calculated measures the Missionaries had undertaken to publish it and attain their aim through proper publication of matter (Marshman 2: 162). The appearance of the newspapers ensured the continuance of the sparks of literary incentive during the period between 1813 and 1833 when the press became an important platform for effective propaganda through a distinct ideal, social and religious observation (Bose 321, 322) manifesting the initiation of a comprehensive awakening in Bengal towards the early part of the nineteenth-century.

Dig-Durshun or 'Showing the Direction' (Carey 330) or *The Signpost* (Drewery 174) was the first periodical in Bengali language published in Bengal from the press of the Serampore Baptist Mission in April 1818 (Bandyopadhyay 4; Potts 101). The sub-title is 'Magazine for Indian Youth'. It was edited by John Clark Marshman, the efficient son of Joshua Marshman (Bandyopadhyay 4). The various sections of the magazine establish a fact that all the issues dealt with an amazing range and a variety of subjects and were published as 'numbers' which have been categorised numerically as 'Number I' till 'Number XVI' and was published bilingually in the English and the Bengali languages (Grierson 9) from April 1818 to March 1819 and from January to April 1820, while 'Number XV to Number XVI were published only in the Bengali language within the time span from April 1818 to March 1819. All the 'Numbers' of the magazine are accompanied with the publication month and the year and they intended 'to stimulate a spirit of inquiry and diffuse information' (Marshman 2: 161) through the spread of knowledge among the young men of Bengal on several educative and informative topics as 'none of the articles had any great pretension for original writing, artistic presentation or literary finish' (*Bengali Literature 1757 – 1857* 208). The first issue/number the magazine dealing with scientific and historical essays was published in April 1818 and the contents[1] are Of the Discovery of America (4 – 17), Of the Limits of Hindoosthan (17 – 29), Mr Sadler's Journey in a Balloon from Dublin to Holyhead (29 – 31) and Of Mount Vesuvius (31 – 33); the last page of *Dig-Durshun* bore notices regarding the contemporary events, which were in accordance to the style of newsletters of the native courts (Marshman 2: 162). Every edition of the magazine had sixteen pages and there would be a continuation of the pages in the next editions as the first edition had pages 1 to 16 and the second edition had pages from 17 to 32 and so on and so forth. *Dig-Durshun* did not instruct and educate the youth of the country on the principles of Christianity (Chattopadhyay 376; Potts 101) rather it was 'secular', disseminating scientific and educative

information in simple language which was agreeable, innovative and appealed to the faculty of the youth as well as the elders by presenting articles dealing with compass, metals, steamboat, botanical sciences of India, historical accounts of ancient and modern nations, travel narratives, trade and commerce of Hindusthan and Portuguese, notices of England and other countries in a simple manner (*History of Bengali Literature 1800 – 1825* 230) garnering the interest of the readers. *Dig-Durshun* was received with unexpected approbation after it was sent to the influential people of the government as it had no contents that could cause an alarm among them. Though it was a positive achievement for the Missionaries but publishing the periodicals on a regular basis was not an easy task and they always feared the sudden hostility of the Company (Chatterjee 182). However being confident by the impunity of censure and the encouragement of the wealthy natives, Joshua Marshman and William Ward issued a prospectus for the publication of a weekly newspaper in the vernacular language and it was published in all the English papers for a fortnight.[2] *Dig-Durshun* was primarily meant for furnishing enrichment through educative reading materials and its simple language drew a lot of readers from the publication of its first issue (No. I) in April 1818 till the last issue (No. XVI) in April 1820. It was more of 'lessons' than 'sermons' for the youth of the country, diffusing 'new education' which was an important facet in the sphere of Indian awakening (Chakraborti 20). It affirmed to intellectually develop the Indian youth and also enabled the people to enrich themselves through an increased information on the detailed history of Hindusthan, the description of the Gour dynasty and the Famine of Bengal, travelogues, domestic affairs of the royal family at England, description of the various metals, physical science of the Earth, the development and progress of printing, on the history and the Sphinx of the Egyptian world, the incident of the burning of seven lakh books in Alexandria, the wall of Babylon, on trade and commerce, on the Great Wall of China, on clouds and their formation, on marine life etc., which were sure to draw the attention of the youth and elders of India.[3] Two copies of the magazine were sent to most of the schools and the senior boys would read aloud the information printed to the other students. The price of the periodical was kept low as the Calcutta School Book Society had subscribed for thousand copies (Chatterjee 183) each month; the topics discussed in *Dig-Durshun* were educative and useful for students at the schools and educational institutions, consequently the magazine was within the affordable means of the masses. A report published in the *Friend of India* in December 1818 stated that

> it has been suggested that certain articles in the monthly *Dig-Durshuna*, might not be wholly uninteresting to our youth in general. As it appears reasonable, therefore, that nothing should be withheld from our Indian youth from which they can derive the slightest information; it is proposed in future to publish separately an English translation of each Number, and for the use of such youth as may wish to read it in both languages, a few copies in both, so as to make the English agree page for page with the Bengalee and English translation of the Numbers already published having been requested, the publishing of the original work will in consequence be suspended for a short season till this can be completed (Bandyopadhyay 4).

By 1821 the Calcutta School Book Society had purchased a total number of 61,250 copies of the *Dig-Durshun* in all its three editions (Ahmed 80). In its popularity it was a forerunner of the *Feed The Minds* campaign undertaken by the Church (Drewery 174) at later times as well as of several nineteenth and twentieth-century journals in Bengal (Potts 101). The success of *Dig-Durshun* can be observed from Article V 'On the progress and present state of the Native Press in India' of the quarterly series of *The Friend of India* (No. XII, 1828) where it is stated that

> the effects of this publication in exciting a spirit of reading has been already seen, some have begun reading it by spelling it out, and some have spent several hours at a time upon it, and some have been known to read it three or four times. The happy missionaries trusted that it would gradually enlarge the native minds without vitiating them to any degree. The *Dig-Durshun* (monthly) and *Samachar Darpan* (weekly) together furnished an extensive matter in almost of about a thousand pages satisfying the taste for reading among readers (140).

With the success in their magazine and newspapers in the Bengali and English languages and the rise in its demand from the schools in Northern India the Serampore Missionaries felt the urge to have the magazine and the papers published in other vernacular languages.[4] Captain Gowan of Delhi extended his helping hand to the Missionaries by not only sending students from Delhi to the Serampore College, but also sent two pundits of Hindi language to translate the *Dig-Durshun* in Hindi and the task of translating the first three issues of the magazine was done under the supervision of Carey in 1818.[5] The issues[6] of *Dig-Durshun* authenticate that

the Missionaries besides following the government dictum, took every effort to publish informative, historical materials which would enrich and enlighten the readers by educating them.

After the translation of the first three issues into Hindi we have no information regarding further Hindi translations of *Dig-Durshun*. Besides, after the publication of the sixteenth issue the Missionaries were busy to prepare the periodical in the English language at the request of the Calcutta School Book Society as a result the publication of the original copies were kept suspended for some months.[7] The magazine did not live for a long time as the publishers were unwilling to publish it and economic factors were also responsible for ceasing its publication.[8] However, it is true that *Dig-Durshun*, 'the first Indian language journal' (Ross 59) did not became a pan-India magazine though it was mentioned in the sub-title that it was a magazine for the Indian youth; however the references to the magazine present in Rev. J. T. Thompson's journals[9] authenticate that it had a wide reading public especially among the students and the general masses as it enriched them with knowledge (Potts 101). *The Calcutta Review* praised *Dig-Durshun* to be a

> very useful work, calculated to open and expand the minds of young Hindus. We have at present no work of a similar class ("Early Bengali Literature and Newspaper" 143).

Dig-Durshun occupies an important landmark in the history of print journalism in Bengal as well as in India (Chattopadhyay 378). The Calcutta School Book Society spoke highly of this newspaper which was also read aloud in the village *chandimandaps* where hundreds of people gathered to listen to the person reading from it (Dewanji 60, 61).

Number I to XVI of *Dig-Durshun* translated into the English language are preserved at the National Library of India and at the Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries at Oxford, as a result it may not be possible to accept Sobita Chattopadhyay's observations where she emphasized that the editions in the English language have not been discovered (Chattopadhyay 378; Bose 368; Bandyopadhyay 4). The edition of *Dig-Durshun* at the National Library of India and at the Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries at Oxford has pages from 97 to 337 followed by a collection of Bengali words and their respective meanings for nine pages similar to the collection present at the end of the first volume for eleven pages. These two collections can separately be taken as two distinct dictionaries with a rich collection of Bengali words and its respective meaning. Today from the presence of such

collection of words we can easily determine that the Missionaries not only intended to educate the students and the youth of the country, especially of the schools run by the Calcutta School Book Society and of the Hindu College (Bose 24), but also through the simplified meanings of the Bengali words for a proper understanding of the language as well as initiating a development of the readers' vocabulary. As this collection also included words used in the articles published in *Dig-Durshun* it may be considered as a glossary besides being a dictionary for the readers. The subjects explored through these articles in lucid and simple language (Chakraborti 20) induced in the heart of the readers 'a habit of reading for pleasure' (Drewery 174).

Though *Dig-Durshun* was concerned to spread education and awareness among the youth of the country yet it did bear few comments on socio-economic and political issues. However in an instance we observe that *Dig-Durshun* hallowed the rule of the East India Company in the province through the publication of the report 'Of the Trade of Hindoosthan' in the April 1818 issue stating that

> under the former sovereigns of Hindoosthan, property was insecure, through the prevalence of oppression. In the whatever country property is insecure, and justice is not equally administered, foreigners do not in general risk their wealth for the purchase of its productions. Under the equitable administration of the English government, the trade and wealth of Hindoosthan has been abundantly increased, and is still increasing (20).

Though it was a statement of blind support for the activities of the English East India Company but it must also be remembered that during that time any slight remark against the interest of the Company would lead to the complete suppression of the magazine as well as all the future plans the Serampore Triad (Oussoren 103) had regarding journalism and spreading of education among the masses; as a result in the initial stage the Missionaries were very careful in presenting their 'criticism that was likely to displease the Government' (Chakraborti 21) which however changed as in the later times, the Missionaries through their press never hesitated to criticize the inhuman policies of the Government. In spite of several inadequacies it can easily be analysed that *Dig-Durshun* attempted to disseminate a considerable amount of information pertaining to geography, politics and history thereby contributed towards framing an intellectual link between the readers and the society around

them ('Early Bengali Literature and Newspapers' 144) which with the passage of time furnished towards the development of the public opinion.

Endnotes:

1. The contents have been obtained from the Carey Library and Research Centre, Serampore College. Translation mine.

2. The advertisement passed under the eye of the censor and the Missionaries expected to receive a notification to desist from the undertaking; but no such communication arrived (Marshman 2: 162).

3. The various topics discussed in the several numbers/issues of *Dig-Durshun* have been obtained from the Carey Library and Research Centre, Serampore College. All the topics have been translated from Bengali to English by me, though the English version of *Dig-Durshun* is available.

4. The Missionaries did not hesitate to respond immediately and started to print elementary tables in Devanagri scripts for distribution in the schools of Northern India. The number of tables printed in Hindi was 6 and words given by way of exercise exceeded 900. Æsop's Fables, books on Geography, Astronomy were also translated in the Devanagri script (Chatterjee 183).

5. The translated copies of *Dig-Durshun* in Hindi were sent to Delhi for distribution in the schools (Ibid.).

6. I have retrieved twelve issues of *Dig-Durshun* at the Carey Library and Research Centre, Serampore College. Two issues have been obtained from the National Library of India and the remaining two issues from the Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford.

7. The following are the editions of *Dig-Durshun* between 1818 and 1821 (Chatterjee 184):

Language	Number of Issues	Publication dates
Bengali	1 – 16 and 17 – 26	April 1818 – March 1819, January 1820 – February 1821
Hindi	1 – 3	July 1818
English – Bengali	1 – 16	April 1818 – July 1819
English	1 – 16	April 1818 – July 1819

8. The title page of the first issue of *Dig-Durshun* mentions that the publication would be completed with the twenty-fourth issue; but twenty-six issues were published. We do not get the name of the editor from the title page of the magazine. The First Report (1819) of the Calcutta School Book Society mentioned that the editor was Marshman (Ibid. 184).

9. Some of the references to *Dig-Durshun* as present in Thompson's journals are:

> They (the Gurkhas) were very anxious to have school books such as *Dig-Durshun*, *Fables* etc. which they mentioned by name having seen them in Captain Young's school at Dehradoon.
>
> I presented him (Gooroo-Novasji) with the *Dig-Durshun*, New Testament which he received by well and said he should read in retirement, the better to understand them.
>
> …but blessed be God that they have since been furnished with Nepali Gospels, Gorkhali tracts, a Compendium of Astronomy and Geography, *Dig-Durshun* and their school books with everything published in Hindi and everyone now beholds with pleasure their progress in knowledge and their love for books.
>
> From the students of Hindoo College I have occasional applications for books, both Hindi and Persian. *Dig-Durshun* and Geography are much sought by them.

The above information has been obtained from an anonymous typescript – '*Dig-Durshun* in Rev. J. T. Thompson's Journals' from the Carey Library and Research Centre, Serampore College, Serampore.

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Skepticism as a Way to Human Well-being: A Philosophical Survey

Shreyasee Majumdar

Abstract:

Skepticism occupies an important place in the field of philosophy in general and epistemology in particular. Skepticism is usually seen as a vicious position which not only nullifies our claim of knowledge but also jeopardizes our everyday practices by destroying existing belief in the physical world as well as moral and religious principles. So it is always supposed that skepticism is opposed to well-being and can never go together. But in Greek philosophy, we find that Pyrrhonists dismissed all knowledge-claims and suspended all judgements but that ultimately led them to a state of tranquility technically called 'Atārāxia'. The story is not very different in Indian scenario. Here also we find Nāgārjuna, Śrīharṣa and others adopting skeptical means not as an end in-itself but for the sake of 'well-being'. This paper is a humble attempt to show that Skepticism can be an alternative way which can lead us to 'well-being'.

Key Words: Skepticism, Well-being, *Atārāxia*, *Epoche, Vaitaṇḍika, Śūnyatā, Catuṣkoṭi, Prasaṅga, Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya.*

Skepticism is generally viewed as a challenge to philosophical enquiry or as a position that nullifies all knowledge claims and withholds all judgements. Although Skepticism, in its mild form, plays a pivotal role in the origination of philosophical enquiry, the devastating and universal type that the Pyrrhonists like Sextus Empiricus intended to defend is deterrent to all enquiries - scientific and philosophical.[1] In both Western and Indian philosophical tradition, we find a long history of the development of Skepticism. As in the traditional Indian philosophical literatures, we do not directly get the term 'skeptic' or 'skepticism', some may raise eyebrows on the possibility of Indian skepticism. But this initial hesitation will not persist if we go through the history of Indian philosophy. In Indian tradition we find the attitude of casting doubt on knowledge claims by refuting others position without establishing one's own position. In Indian philosophy people having this attitude is known as a *Vaitaṇḍika.* The designation *Vaitaṇḍika* is ascribed to thinkers like Nāgārjuna, Jayarāśi and Śrīharṣa quite aptly. There was however a thinker even before the birth of lord Buddha, named Sañjaya who adopted the destructive approach of criticizing

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views of others without advocating his own theory. But it is not very clear whether there was any view of his own behind the destructive approach he adopted. Attitude of the vaitaṇḍikas resembles to some extent the attitude of the skeptics. Perhaps this similarity prompted Professor B.K.Matilal to consider the *vaitaṇḍikas* of Indian tradition as skeptics.[2]

Traditionally the Skeptics are seen as an arch rival of philosophers. Instead of giving any positive worldview they are supposed to jeopardize our everyday practices by destroying our existing beliefs, moral and religious principles. Where the common world view and moral outlook stand at stake, there it is natural to think that individual well- being can never be restored. Here a curious question can come to one's mind: Is it utterly impossible to uphold the position of the skeptic and maintain well being at the same time? In this paper, considering both the Western and Indian perspective, a humble attempt will be made to see whether 'Skepticism' can lead to 'Well-being'.

At the very outset, it is necessary to know what is meant by the term 'well-being'. According to *Oxford dictionary*, 'well-being' refers to a state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.[3] Well-being is most commonly used in philosophy to mean what is ultimately good for a person. Well being is a kind of value sometimes called prudential value to be distinguished from aesthetic value or moral value. What marks it out is the notion of 'good for'.[4]

Many think that Skepticism and well-being can never go together rather skepticism is opposed to well-being. But we should not forget that the same attempt has been made in Greek philosophy mainly by Pyrrho and his followers. Pyrrho of Elis was regarded as a model of the skeptical way of life. He tried to avoid endorsing to any doctrines about the nature of reality. Pyrrhonian Skepticism can be characterized as the cultivation of suspension of judgement or doubt. This kind of skeptical theme does not make pronouncements on the possibility of knowledge, certainty, or justification. It only urges suspension of belief.[5] Sextus was an outstanding adherent of Pyrrho. He was deeply moved by the notion of suspension of judgement (epoche). Sextus was of the opinion that one should abstain from making any judgements about things as he strongly believed that there is nothing which can be known as certain. The Pyrrhonists dismissed our knowledge claims by suspending all judgements. But this suspension does not lead them to anarchism rather to a psychic state of bliss and tranquility technically called 'Atārāxia'.

'Atārāxia' is a Greek philosophical term and plays an important role in many ancient Greek philosophical schools. Three schools namely, Epicureanism, Pyrrhonism and Stoicism often employed this term within their philosophies. 'Atārāxia', considered by Epicureans to be freedom from mental discomfort, was a key component of the Epicurean conception of the highest good.[6]'Atārāxia' was also an important part of stoic philosophy. Although Atārāxia was not an explicit goal of Stoicism, stoic felt that by living in accordance with nature one would also end up in a state of atārāxia.[7] Now, Pyrrhonists viewed atārāxia as a state of mental tranquility and they felt that not only could Pyrrhonism lead to atārāxia but also that tranquility of that atārāxia would bring about happiness for a person.[8]

Pyrrho was neither a pessimist nor was he indifferent to the mundane world. Adoption of the attitude he prescribed is directed towards a goal; the goal is described by him in the following way- "there will result, first, a disinclination to make assertions and, then, 'atārāxia'." [9] So the chief goal towards which the noncommittal attitude is directed is a state of quietude where all mental states are arrested. In this state of indifference one refrains one-self from making any positive or negative assertion and thus the mind is filled with peace. The Pyrrhonians always strive for mental peace and happiness so they try to avoid upholding any doctrine. In this way Pyrrhonian skepticism is leading to well being.

The story is not very different in Indian tradition. Here also we find some exceptional thinkers employing Skeptical means not as an end in itself but as a means to attain a final goal i.e either *Abhyudaya* or *Niḥśreyasa*. Nāgārjuna,a *vaitaṇḍika* questioned even basic categorical presuppositions and criteria of proof assumed by almost everyone in the Indian tradition to be axiomatic and therefore should rightly be considered as a skeptic. Nāgārjuna, is the champion of the *Śūnyatā* doctrine. *'Śūnya'* though literally means void, is not void in the true sense of the term. '*Śūnyatā*' is used in a philosophically technical sense by the mādhyamikas as essencelessness having no self existence, being devoid of self being, which has its basis in *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination). What Pyrrhonism calls "relativism" may be central to what the Madhyamaka and the other Buddhists call "dependent origination". Nāgārjuna employed the technique of *catuṣkoti*[10]and *prasaṅga* (reductio ad absurdum) to nullify the existing views of his opponents and showed that everything is ultimately *śūnya* (*niḥsvabhāva*) i.e dependently originated. *Śūnyatā (emptiness)* is not another view rather relinquishing of all views.[11]Nāgārjuna has no proposition of his own. In his *Vigrahavyāvartanī* he declared, "nāsti ca mama pratijñā".[12] What Pyrrhonism calls "suspension of judgement" (*epoche*) seems consistent with what the *mādhyamikas*

understand as recognition of "emptiness" (*śūnyatā*) leading to the "silence of the sages".[13]Where everything is dependently originated and essenceless in nature, nothing can be said conclusively about their reality. So Nāgārjuna only nullified the opponents' view without establishing his own. In this way in Nāgārjuna we witness the employment of skepticism to promote his theory of *śūnyatā* and what the mādhyamikas call *Nirvāna* is nothing but the realization of *śūnyatā*. Thus Skepticism is directed towards attainment of *Nirvāna* in mādhyamika system. In both Buddhism and Pyrrhonian Skepticism some kind of liberation from suffering is the goal. Hence we can say that Nāgārjuna's skeptical attitude is not an end in itself rather it facilitates the way to well-being in the form of *Nirvāna*.

Similar attempt has been made by Śrīharṣa, a popular *vaitaṇḍika* and an *advaitin* at the same time. To him Brahman, the sole reality is self-evident in nature requiring no proof. Hence admission of *pramāna* and adoption of *pramāna-prameya* dichotomy as well seems meaningless to him. He introduced a cognitive type of skepticism in his *khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya* to defend the monistic view of reality indirectly through the refutation of dualistic views. The sole weapon in Śrīharṣa's philosophical arsenal is *vitaṇḍā*, a special skeptical mode of argumentation that is concerned exclusively with refutation. [14] According to Śrīharṣa, since non dual Brahman lies beyond thought, philosophy can play at best a negative role in clearing a space for the possibility of the truth of the advaita standpoint. Hence the destructive method of *vitaṇḍā* proves to be the ideal methodology for an advaitin eager to refute competing realist positions without attempting the impossible task of a positive justification of the advaita standpoint. According to the *advaitins,* the realization of non-dual Brahman removes ignorance and ultimately paves the way to liberation. Thus here also we find that Śrīharṣa is employing skeptical means in order to achieve the ultimate good i.e liberation.

The lokāyata thinker Jayarāśi Bhaṭṭa (8^{th} -9^{th} century C.E) was a hard core vaitaṇḍika who refuted possibility of all elements and principles. In his aptly named text *Tattvopaplavasiṃha* (the lion who devours all Truths), Jayarāśi advocated the polemic (upaplav) of all tattvas. He went beyond the standard lokāyata doctrine in rejecting not only inference but even direct perception as a valid source of knowledge. Bhaṭṭa in his book, thus espouses a sort of metaphysical agnosticism and ethical stoicism that exceeds the materialist emphasis of most lokāyata. Yet he shares their conclusion that theism should be rejected and that pleasures must be the sole goal of life.[15]Thus it can be said that Jayarāśi's main intention of upholding skeptical attitude is to reach a state of happiness. In this connection we can say

that in case of Nāgārjuna and Śrīharṣa we have witnessed that skepticism is directed towards *niḥśreyasa* (ultimate pleasure) whereas, in case of Jayarāśi it is towards attaining *abhyudaya* (mundane pleasure).

In this article attempt has been made to show that Skepticism is not always something negative, it can be a means to well-being. Whenever we adhere to any views or try to theorize we invite more contradiction and conflict. In the words of poet and composer Rajanikanta Sen we can say,

"…Nā rākhi jotil nyāyer bārotā
Bicāre bicāre bāre asārotā…."

The concept of reasoning is well accepted but too much argumentation in every step of our life begets rift within individuals. This process of argumentation often seems endless hence we should be tolerant enough and may at times seek an alternative way of suspending our own judgement for the greater interest of mankind. At the present time the society is witnessing much division, chaos, conflict and violence. In this need of hour, Skepticism can be a savior of fallen humanity towards the way to well being.

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Whom is Jalāl al-Din Rūmī closer to: Śaṁkara or Rāmānuja?

Shubhra Jyoti Das

Abstract:

When only the approach towards the Ultimate reality, God in both the cases, is considered; Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, possibly the most famous among Sufi philosophers, is found to be close Rāmānuja. On the same ground, Sufism – in – general has been considered as analogous to *Bhaktivāda* in both academic and popular discourses. Therefore, a lot of comparative studies have been done on Sufism and medieval or modern Indian *Bhakti* Movements. But contrary to the common view, the paper argues that Rūmī is closer to Śaṁkara than Rāmānuja. It further claims that there is a need to philosophically distinguish between classical, centred around the *Vaiṣnavism* of Rāmānuja to that of Srī Caitanya, and post – classical phases in Indian *Bhaktivāda* in order to appreciate the hypothesis that perhaps Sufism has been one of the instrumental factors in transforming *Advaita Vedānta* and appropriating *bhakti* as an independent path for the attainment of the non – dual state.

Key Words: *bhakti*, *sufism*, *advaita*, appropriation, instrumental factor.

Introduction:

It is important, at the outset, to understand the theoretical framework within which all the three thinkers under consideration – Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Rūmī develop their respective philosophies. Perhaps it is not as difficult to trace the frame in case of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, because of their systematic expositions and references to the *Prasthāna* texts, as it is in the case of Rūmī since he is appreciated more as a poet than a thinker. Still a little careful reading of his works reveals an underlying structure. Prof. A. J. Arberry in his *Sufism* (74) writes,

> "By the end of 10th century Sufism had become a fairly rigid and clearly definable way of life and system of thought. When al-Qushairī wrote his Risāla ('Epistle to the Sufis') in 1046 he had several earlier compendia to draw upon, and in fact we find him quoting quite freely from the writings of al-Sarrāj and al-Sulamī. The classical formulation of Sufi doctrine on the mystical side has always been held by the Sufis

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> to have been finally accomplished by al-Qushairī; its reconciliation and assimilation with orthodox Sunni theology and religious law was the work of the great Abū Hāmid al-Ghazzālī (died 1111), carried out by stages in a considerable number of relatively short books, and consolidated and consummated in the *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-din*, which was written between 1099 and 1102."

Rūmī accepts these formulations, which could probably be termed as principle of Sufism – in – general, done by his predecessors without any essential change. There could be two reasons behind this acceptance – 1) Rūmī was more interested in the experiential dimension of Sufism and therefore, leaving these doctrinal aspects untouched perhaps assumes it all as known to his readers. 2) He was aware of the efficacy of these sets of guidelines since his first teacher Burhān al-Dīn was a direct disciple of his father Bahā al-Dīn who was trained by his grandfather, about whom Prof. Arberry, in his later work 'Discourses of Rūmī'(02), adds, "He (Rūmī's grandfather) was additionally a Sufi mystic, thus following in the footsteps of the great Muhammad al-Ghazzāli of Tus whose rigorous attacks on the philosophers had seriously undermined the influence of Avicenna and virtually put an end to free speculation in eastern Islam." Thus, we can refer to al-Qushairī's formulations or Ghazzāli's terminologies, as representations of Rūmī's thoughts, without much ambiguity.

Rūmī's philosophical proximity to Rāmānuja:

There are some striking similarities between the approaches towards attaining the *summum bonum* of life, knowledge of God in both the cases, of Rūmī and Rāmānuja.

For Rūmī, intense Love for God is the only way to reach Him. The first poem of the *Masnavi*, begins with a reed complaining of its separation from the reed – bed (Nicholson 31). This perhaps symbolises the yearning of the God's seeker to go back to his genesis. Similarly, in Rāmānuja's scheme, *bhakti* i.e. Divine Love is the means for attaining God. In fact, he had entered the field of philosophy in order to save and support the *Ālvār*'s legacy of teachings on longing for God.

For Rāmānuja, the knowledge of God, which is the cause of liberation, is attained only by the grace (*prasāda*) of God. Self – effort, as a matter of fact, is almost insignificant. Likewise, for Rūmī, the way to God is neither through intellect since He is beyond thought nor by means of the senses, as He is not material. God is known by revelation and Divine illumination. Thus, for Rūmī, Revelation is not a historical record of the past but a possibility for each and everyone. Of course, it too can happen only by the will of God.

Rūmī accepts al-Qushairī's list of forty five[1] stages, including twenty stations (*maqām*) and twenty three states (*hāl*) in a seeker's journey towards God. Beginning with *taubā* (conversion), the first series terminates with the 20th *maqām* known as *ridā* (satisfaction). Similarly the states (*hāl*) beginning with *ubūdīya* (serventhood) culminates in *ma'rifa* (gnosis), which is 43rd in the sequence.

Rāmānuja, on the other hand, prescribes the development of *bhakti* in three stages – *sādhanā, parā* and *paramā bhakti*. Again, the transition from first to second phase is mediated by *prema bhakti*. The first stage is marked by intense faith in God and by the realisation of ephemeral nature of the worldly accomplishments. This is very close to the first *maqām tauba* [1][2], translated as conversion, which stands for the 'desertion of the worldly life in order to engage in the service of Lord' and *yaqin* [17] i.e. 'firm faith' in Him, put together.

The transition to *parā bhakti* is ensured by the following disciplines (Tapasyānanda 76-79) –

a) *Viveka* refers to the practice of discrimination at all the levels of sense – pleasures. It is very close to *wara'*[5] i.e. abstaining from all unnecessary and unseemly occupations, together with *zuhd* [6] i.e. renunciation of even the permitted pleasures.
b) *Vimoka* comprises of controlling wrath, jealousy and carnal impulses. In the same way, *Mukhālafat al – nafs wa – dhikr 'uyūbihā* [13] which means opposition to the carnal soul remembering its vices, prescribes control over two vices in particular viz. *hasad* (envy) and *ghība* (slander).
c) *Abhyāsa* stands for the practices like chanting, *pujā*, mass prayer etc., and is similar to *dhikr* [28] i.e. remembrance or having God constantly in mind and heart.
d) *Kriyā* is meant for performing five kinds of *yajña*s viz. *brahma yajña, deva yajña, pitṛ yajña, manuṣya yajña* and *bhuta yajña* in order to get rid of the fivefold *ṛṇa*s. This is akin to *Futūwa* [29] i.e. chivalrousness or fulfilling the terms of the traditions.
e) *Kalyāṇa* is practising virtues like truth, non – violence, straightforwardness, kindness, benevolence etc. It is almost analogous to *sidq* [25] i.e. truthfulness in thought and act along with *khulukq* [31] that stands for noble moral character.

f) *Anavasāda* is preservation of optimism and positive attitude which, in my view, would be a by product of *tawakkul* [15] or trust in God.

g) *Anuddharṣa* is the preservation of even temperament which will follow from *wilāya* [34] i.e. being in God's protection or sainthood.

As *parā bhakti* ripens, it gets metamorphosed to *paramā bhakti*. *Bhakti*, as a whole, is equated to *dhyāna* (concentration) and *upāsana* (continuous thought of God) which is like *murāqaba* [19] i.e. constant awareness of God.

The doctrine *prapatti*[3] is also comparable to the meaning of the stages like *ubūdiya* [21] i.e. a true sense of being subject entirely to *Rabb* (God) and *irāda* [22] i.e. the desire to have no personal desire, only seeking what God desires, taken together.

The above comparison tells us quite clearly that, perhaps Rāmānuja's whole prescription for cultivating *bhakti* is virtually absorbed in the system accepted by Rūmī and vice – versa. The retaining of last two stages, *mahabba* [44] i.e. Love, which is a consequence of God's Love for man and especially *shauq* [45] i.e. yearning to be constantly with God, even after attaining *ma'rifa* [43] or gnosis, which appears to mark the complete transition from station to state, implies the emphasis that conceivably Rūmī laid on the physical death of a God's seeker as the final cause of emancipation. The reasons for admitting two additional stages in the Sufi doctrine and Rāmānuja's justification for accepting *videha – mukti* are almost alike.

Rūmī and Rāmānuja vis a vis Śaṁkara:

Though there are similarities, as we have seen, between Rāmānuja and Rūmī concerning their approaches towards the Ultimate Reality yet there are some *fundamental* differences between them as regards their exposition on its nature.

According to Rūmī, as Prof. Nicholson notes (23), "There is One Real Being, the Ultimate ground of all existence. This reality may be viewed either as God (the Divine Essence) or as the World (phenomena by which the hidden essence is made manifest)." Rūmī does not accept any essential 'internal difference', as *svagatabheda* accepted by Rāmānuja, within the Ultimate Reality. Rāmānuja, while commenting on the *Bhagavadgītā*, maintains (63), "The forgoing implies that the difference between the Lord, the sovereign over all, and the individual selves, as also the difference among the individual selves themselves, are real. This has been declared by the Lord Himself. For different terms like 'I', 'you', 'these', 'all' and 'we' have been used by Lord while explaining the truth of eternality in order to remove

the misunderstanding of Arjuna who is deluded by ignorance." Rūmī's position in this regard is closer to Śaṁkara than Rāmānuja. Śaṁkara's position is echoed in (Gambhirānanda Vol.1, 190), "What is indeed here is there; what is there is here likewise. He who sees as though there is difference here, goes from death to death"

Reality, in Rūmī's philosophy, is divided into two categories, viz. 'the realm of nature' and 'the realm of spirit'. Matter belongs to the domain of nature and the self to the sphere of spirit. Self is One and has a kind of absolute independent existence. According to Rūmī, the perception of One Self as differentiated and many with respect to different individual bodies should be interpreted as a consequence of the categories of understanding. The realm of spirit is independent of time whereas that of nature is a subject of time.

Likewise, Śaṁkara too while commenting on *Iśa Upaniṣad*, rejecting the duality of the Self and identifying it with the Supreme Reality, declares it as all – pervading. He writes (Gambhirānanda Vol.1,05), "All this is to be covered by one's own Self, the Lord, through His supreme reality (present in the realization): 'As the indwelling Self (of all), I am all this'; all this that is unreal, whether moving or not moving, is to be covered by one's own supreme Self." Thus Rūmī's definition of the self is closer to Śaṁkara.

As far as the division of reality in Rūmī is concerned, it is more akin to Brahman and *jagat* of Śaṁkara, as the former is independent of time and the later is a subject of it. It is not analogous to Rāmānuja since, as already mentioned, Rūmī doesn't accept any division within the sphere of the spirit and, by no means, Rāmānuja accepts a total extinction of the lower self.

For Rūmī, like any other Sufi, though experience of God is possible during a seeker's lifetime only, yet he also highlights physical death as the cause of final release[4]. Thus, acceptance of *jivanamukti* brings Śaṁkara closer to Rūmī. Still it won't be right to say that Śaṁkara did not emphasize on *videhamukti* at all. He categorically mentions that due to presence of non – exhausted *prārabdha karma*, even after liberation, which is cessation of *sancita* and *sanciyamana karma*, the body continues to exist in the world. Like the arrow shot from the bow, the body continues to reap the fruits until it expires; but no new actions are accumulated. The final deliverance comes with death[5]. Here too we find Śaṁkara closer to Rūmī, because Rāmānuja never accepts the possibility of *jivanamukti*.

Moreover, Śaṁkara's scheme is not devoid of *bhakti*. He writes (Śaṁkarācārya 4-5), "The Vedic law of works, promoting prosperity in the world, and enjoined on the class and

life stations, promotes the purification of mind when it is observed with a sense of dedication to God and without any expectation for reward;…It also indirectly subserves the attainment of emancipation, since such work purifies the mind and the purified mind becomes fit for practicing the discipline of knowledge which, in due course generates the liberating knowledge itself." Therefore, about the knowledge of *karmayoga* which is a tool for the purification of mind Śaṁkara says (62), "Note that action, righteous or unrighteous, is bondage and that Arjuna was to discard their bondage by virtue of knowledge attained through God's grace." Thus, *bhakti*[6] can be a tool for all those whose minds are not pure to move towards liberation. This point too reveals propinquity of Rūmī and Śaṁkara.

The defence forwarded by Rūmī in favour of *an – al – haqq*, the Sufi declaration which comes very close to Śaṁkara's interpretation of *aham brahmāsmi*. Rūmī writes (Nicholson 23), "People imagine that it is a presumptuous claim, whereas it is really a presumptuous claim to say *an – al – abd* 'I am the slave of God'; and *an – al – haqq* 'I am God' is an expression of great humility. The man who says *an – al – abd* 'I am the slave of God' affirms two existences, his own and God's, but he that says *an – al – haqq* 'I am God' has made himself non – existent and has given himself up and says 'I am God' i.e. 'I am naught, He is all: there is no being but God's.' This is the extreme of humility and self – abasement." But when there are no two entities left, logically the existence of Divine Love must also come to an end making it almost an equivalent case of Śaṁkara's '*śivoham śivoham*'. Thus, the position[7] indisputably proves closest proximity of Rūmī and Śaṁkara.

Conclusion:

The above analysis clearly points to the fact that Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, though initially appears to be close to Rāmānuja, as a matter of fact is closer to Śaṁkara when both the nature and the approach towards the Ultimate Reality is considered. Therefore, perhaps one more point deserves our attention. There has been a lot of comparison between Sufism and *Bhaktivāda* in both popular and academic discourses. Here, we need to make at least a philosophical, if not exactly chronological, distinction between classical and post – classical phases of *Bhaktivāda*. The classical phase, ranging from Rāmānuja's *Viśiṣṭādvaita* to Srī Caitanya's *Acintyabhedābheda*, did not accept *Advaita* as an end to the *bhaktimārga*.

But in the post – classical segment, *bhaktimārgis* like Madhusudana Saraswati, though many others continued with the traditional dualistic position, moved towards a confluence of both. This process possibly culminated in Masters like Sri Ramakrishna when he declared the experience of *devabhāva*[8] at times, in spite of being an ardent devotee of the

Divine mother. This indicated an enrichment of *Advaita Vedānta* with the appropriation of *bhakti* as an independent path. Śaṁkara did not entertain *bhakti* as self-sufficient. We may therefore convincingly say that *Advaita Vedānta* went through a transformation in the post – classical phase.

Now, from the above comparison one hypothesis could be floated – perhaps Sufism was *one* of the instrumental factors which brought about the transformation of *Advaita Vedānta*. Sufism is one of those traditions which declared the possibility of monism (almost synonymous with the Non – dualism of *Advaita Vedānta*) through Divine Love (a concept close to *bhakti*). Since the change in *Advaita* has occurred following the arrival of Sufism in India, there is a sound ground to entertain the hypothesis. One may argue that both *Advaitic* and *Bhaktivādi* elements are found in the *Upaniṣads*. But we must note that in the entire classical phase nobody extracted the attainment of *Advaita* through *bhakti* as autonomous path, in any school. As one can understand the philosophical proximity of Sufism and *Advaita Vedānta*, by comparing Śaṁkara and Rūmī, this is an area that needs exploration and research.

Endnotes:

1. Refer to Prof. Arberry's analysis of the list in 'The structure of Sufi theory and Practice' (p74 -83) in Sufism – An account of the mystics of Islam
2. Numbers within the [square bracket] indicates the number of stage given by al-Qushairī in his catalogue.
3. ānukūlyasya saṁkalpaḥ prātikulyasya varjanam. rakṣiṣyatīti viśvaso goptṛtve varaṇam tathā. ātmanikṣepakārpaṇye ṣaḍvidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ.
4. The death of a master is celebrated in Sufism as Urs or the complete union of the master with the Beloved. This marks the complete liberation of the individual.
5. Refer to Śaṁkara's commentary on the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (VI, 14 – 22)
6. Here bhakti can be understood as karma performed for the sake of God. This is one way of conceiving bhakti as suggested in Bhagavadgitā's Bhakti Yoga (XII.10 – 11).
7. Refer to Śaṁkara's commentary on The Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, (I.4.10)
8. In Kathāmrita Sri Ramakrishna says that at times, due to intensification of devabhāva, he used to feel restless until someone would come and prostrate before him.

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Road Safety is a Prime Rule of Traffic System :A Case Study of Kolkata

Sumana Das

Abstract:

The main aim of this paper is to analyze the road accident in kolkata.Analyze shows that the distribution of road accidental deaths and injuries in kolkata varies according to age,gender,monrth and time.Age group 18-59 years is the most vulnerable population group.Though mlaes phase higher level of fatalities and injuries than their female counterparts.Moreover road accidents are relatively higher in winter and during working hours.The main causes of accidents are poor condition of road,reckless driving,poor condition of vehicle and lack of awarness among people. A lot of corrective measures have been adopt by the government of West bengal and kolkata municipal corporation and the traffic police department.

Key Words: Drunk driving, Traffic safety, Fatalities, Safety rules, Breath analyser, Penalties and punishment

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Introduction:

The kolkata metropolitan area is situated on the land of the state west bengal and it is in the eastern part of india, along side the holy river ganga with a very high populated density.The most central part of this metropolitan area is under the administrative of kolkata police,the land size of this part is 104.5 sq.km. As the economy of this area is totally depending on industrial and service sector,and this type of economy largely depend on quicker transport the vehicle pressure on the road is huge and consequently the occurence of accident is generally very frequent.The road network is very much congested with a total road length of 1416.4km,where the land size under this area is only 104.5 sq k.m.

Area of the study:

The area Selected for study is the KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION AREA comprising of 141 wards in 15 boroughs with an area of 187.33 sq. K.m.The population density is one of the highest in the world in some of the wards of north kolkata while redistribution of wards in south along with refugee influx in the extreme south kolkata

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has been able to balance the population density to some extent.The area extends from cossipur,chitpur in north to jadavpur,thakurpur,behala in south and tangra,tiljala in east to watganj,metiabruz in west.

Objective of the study:

The major objectives of this study are

- To study the recent trends,pattern and location of such fatal cases
- To measure the intensity of accident
- To relate the population density,road density and the accident prone areas
- To suggest some measures which may be beneficial from the point of view of transport study.

Methodology of the study:

- Data Collection:-All the required data which have been used to give a structure to this paper are being collected from the Head office of Kolkata traffic police, LalBazar. And primary data are collected by traffic survey in different roads.
- Data Analysis and Presentation:- To analyze the data in this paper some general software and GIS software have been used. The collected data are presented by differrent cartographic and statistical analysis.

Results and analysis:

The traffic accident situation in kolkata as well as in ndia is really alarming. The incidence of accidental deaths has shown an increasing trend during the period 2007-2012 with an increase of 39.17% in the year 2012.It has total 6779 accidental cases among which 471 are fatalities,1608 injuries and 872 non injuries.

Causes of accidents:

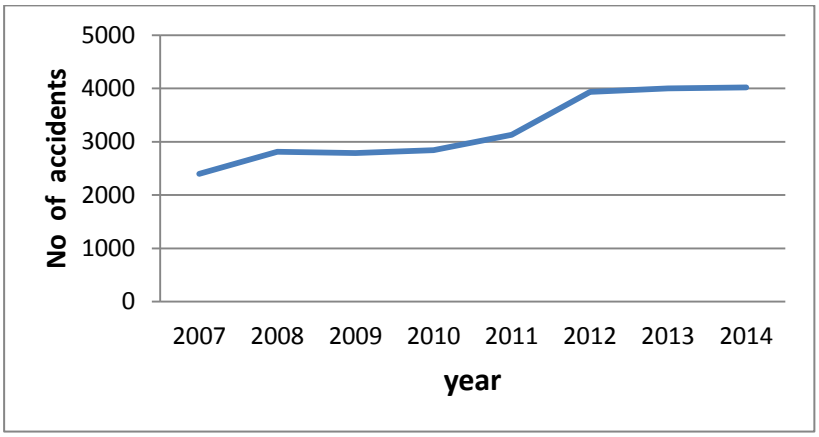
The main causes of the road accidents are poor condition of vehicles,bad geometrics of road,driving impairment,aggressiveness of the drivers,crossing the road ignoring zebra crossing,and narrow road space with huge traffic volume and foggy condition during winter.

Trend of road accidents:

The accident prone roads of three years i.e 2011,2012 and 2013 have been compared where it is seen that APC road,D.H road,Taratala road,Central avenue,M.G road are common in that these roads are more accident prone roads than other roads in kolkata.The trend line showing the trend of accidents for the successive years of 2007 to 2014. However the trend of

curve is upward rising. Therefore certain measures are needed to be taken to slow down the accidental rates.

CHART 1.1 THE TREND OF ACCIDENTS



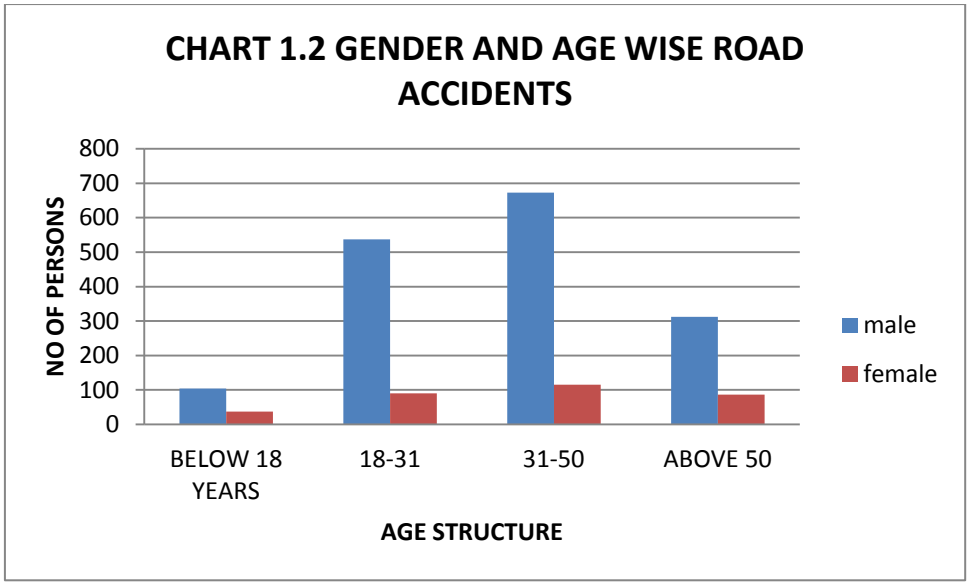
Source: Kolkata traffic police

Gender-wise accidents:

The analysis of accidental deaths in last 10years in kolkata shows greater vulnerability of male towards accidents which are probably due to greater exposure of males to the outside world of the greatest workforce participation. The females, mainly confined to the household activities, are less affected but with their increasing workforce participation the trend is on increase.

Age factors in accidental deaths:

Age factor plays a crucial role in this context.In a recent survey conducted by the kolkata traffic police all over, spanning over 2012-2013,about 450-500people in 18-30 age groups die in road accidents accounting for 40-50% of total accidents every year. Number of children in 5-10 years age group who succumb to road accident annualy is about 10%, most being street children. It is said the next highly vulnerable age group which comes just after the age group of 18 years to 30 years is above 50 years. Weak eye sight,poor reflex, mental pressure and anxiety are the main causes for this accident.



Source: Kolkata traffic police

Hourly distribution of accident:

Here it is being tried to find out the times during a day that are very highly vulnerable to different types of accident. There are mainly three type of accident being taken under consideration, these are Fatal, Serious injury, Simple injury or minor injury. In this regard a full day has been divided into several parts. From the following table in can be said that,the dangerous time zone for accidents are 9 A.M to 12 P.M and 6 P.M to 10 P.M. As within this time slot the working populations and students are generally remain very high on road because the time slot from 9 A.M. to 12 P.M. is the time when they go to their working places and institutions and within the time slot from 1pm to 5pm, they use to back to home. Nearly 80-90% of all accident cases occure during this part of the day. Notably more accidents occur beyond traffic hours probably due to lack of traffic control, increase movement of heavy goods vehicle high speed and the drunk condition of the driver.

Month wise accident:

There is a growing number of accidents in kolkata from october to november and the reason lies in heavy influxes of tourists from outside the city specially from rural area during this winter month to visit zoo,victoria memorial.museum etc.and also for various festivals celebrated during this time. Another cause of accidents during winter is heavy fog. The rainy month of july and august record accidents on account of the roads becoming slippery.

Table 1.1

MONTH WISE ACCIDENT PATTERN		
NAME OF THE MONTH	**FATAL**	**NON FATAL**
JANUARY	47	240
FEBRUARY	42	223
MARCH	34	233
APRIL	37	223
MAY	46	285
JUNE	38	323
JULY	45	282
AUGUST	38	232
SEPTEMBER	39	250
OCTOBER	49	297
NOVEMBER	49	288
DECEMBER	34	340

Source: Kolkata traffic police

Pedestrian death and injure type:

Motorized vehicles accounted for 95.5 per cent of the total road accidents during the calendar year 2014. Amongst the vehicle categories, two-wheelers accounted for the highest share in total road accidents (28.8 per cent) in 2014 followed by cars, jeeps and taxis (23.6 per cent); trucks, tempos, tractors and other articulated vehicles (19.7 per cent), Other motor vehicles (9.0 per cent), buses (8.3 per cent) and Auto-Rickshaws (6.1 per cent). Share of two wheelers in total road accidents has increased continuously from 26.3 per cent in 2013 to 27.3 per cent in 2014. Next to two wheelers, share of cars, jeeps and taxis has also gone up slightly from 22.2 per cent in 2013 to 22.7 per cent. The number of pedestrians injured by car is comparatively higher than any other vehicles.

Vehicle-wise no of accident:

The number of accidents varies with the different types of vehicle. The pie diagram shows the number of death and injured persons by different vehicles.From this diagram it can be said that the number of accident by motor cyclist is maximum. One of the main cause of this accident is lack of awareness of people. Many times they do not use helmet. Motorized vehicles accounted for 95.5 per cent of the total road accidents during the calendar year 2014. Amongst the vehicle categories, two-wheelers accounted for the highest share in total road accidents (38.8 per cent) in 2014 followed by cars, jeeps and taxis ,trucks, tempos, and other articulated vehicles (19.7 per cent), Other motor vehicles (9.0 per cent), buses (28.3 per cent). Share of two wheelers in total road accidents has increased continuously from 26.3 per cent in 2012 to 27.3 per cent in 2013 and 28.8 per cent in 2014. Next to two wheelers, share of

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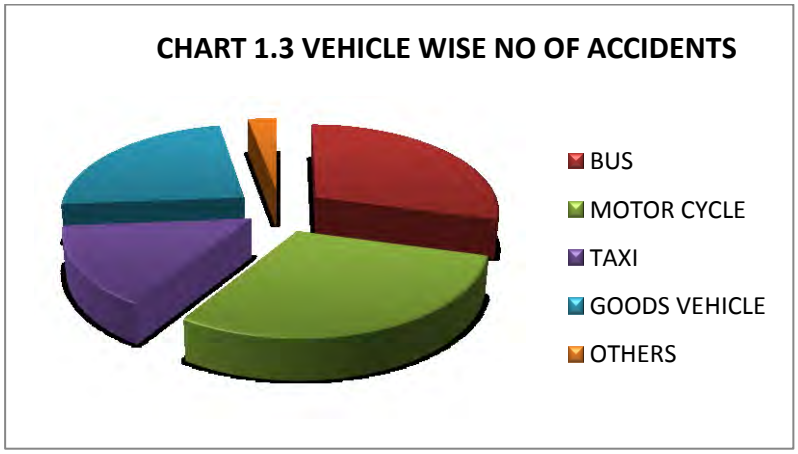

Source: Kolkata traffic police

Corrective measures:

Accidents can be fatal or non fatal,but the mental and emotional impacts of an accident are deeper than physical damage.

A lot of corrective measures have been adopted by the government of West Bengal Kolkata Municipal Corporation and the Traffic Police Department which can be discussed as under.

- **Penalties and Punishment**: A study reveals that drivers, riders, pedestrians account for more than half of the traffic deaths occuring every year specially for ignoring traffic rules. Some of the punishments are :

- Kolkata police have recently launched a drive to find pedestrians crossing roads with out using zebra crossing anfd traffic signals. Rs. 50 will be fined for crossing road without using zebra crossing and traffic signals at differents road junction.
- Leaving vehicles in a position that may cause danger obstruction to any road user are prosecuted under U/S122/177MVA.
- Violation of signals and taking U turn are considered serious offence and are fineable.

Implementing Tools of Safety: Modern policing is critically dependent on technology because safety of citizens is the prime concern.

Table 1.2

EQUIPMENTS	QUANTITY
CCTV CAMERA	36
TRAFFIC LIGHT SIGNAL	403
BREATH ANALYSER MACHINE	50
OXYGEN CONCENTRATOR	11
DIGITAL CAMERA	28
HANDYCAM CAMERA	24
LOUD HAILER	82
SPEED RADER GUN	15
GAS ANALYSER(SMOKE TEST)	10

Source: Kolkata traffic police

Tools of technology:

- Speed Radar guns are used to detect the over speeding vehicles.
- C.C TV's are installed at strategic locations to monitor traffic flow centrally from Lal Bazar traffic contrl room.
- Breath analyzer are used to detect drunken driving.
- All the traffics guards are connected with central server through virtual private network system which helps to maintain traffic data in scientific manner.
- Traffics alerts in case of congestion /diversion through sms system is provided to common people
- Social networking system like facebook amd twitter are becoming more popular day by day.

Conclusion:

With the increase in polpulation and various socio-economic functions,volume of traffic is increasing at tremendous rate.Kolkata city with its majority of roads having a north-south alignment has its major accident prone area aligned in the same direction.

- **Some recommendation for city traffic:** The five members traffic commitee,set up by calcutta high court submitted its report to the division bench. The commitee,which surveyed the strand road,brabourn road,chitpur road,M.G road and kalakar street has recommended the following measures:
  - No shop owner should be allowed to stack goods on the pavement.

- No structure should be allowed on the pavement.
- No vehicle should be parked besides the pavement for loading and unloading purposes during office hours.
- No hand-rickshaw should be allowed to be parked on the pavements.
- There should be a railing along the pavement to prevent pedestrians from walking on the carriage way.
- On the one way roads, parking should be allowed only on one side leaving at least fifty feet from the crossing.

- **Strategies for development:**
  - State government has adopted a policy of dispersal of metropolitan activity to evolve a decentralised spatial structure.To achieve this two actions have been taken-
    a) To develop small and medium towns and growth centres in the state outside kolkata metropolitan area (KMA).
    b) To develop municipal town as well as new settlement with in KMA but outside metro.
  - Existing wholesale trade in Burrabazar should be gradually relocated outside metro.
  - There is need for engineering,assessing and improving accident prone stretches.

- **Golden rules for the road:**

  The kolkata traffic police, in its annual review report for the year 2013, suggested some certain rules for safe movement and journey.

  a) Pedestrians:-

  I. Always walk on the foot path,they are meant for you.

  II. Cross roads where there are pedestrian crossing.

  III. Even kerb be drill and also teach children.The five golden rules of kerb drill are- STOP AT THE KERB/LOOK RIGHT/LOOK LEFT/LOOK RIGHT AGAIN

  IV. If the road is clear walk straight across,dont run.

  b) Before driving make sure that:

  I. Your vehicles is registered**.**

  II. You have a valid driving license.

III. You are not under influence of drinks/drugs

IV. You were wearing a helmet if driving a two-wheeler.

c) While on move:

I. Know your route and choose the correct lane.

II. Keep foot off the clutch and drive in correct gear.

III. Always keep both hands on the steering wheel

IV. Never turned around to talk to another passengers or allow your attention to be diverted

V. Never race on public roads.

VI. Never exceed the speed limits

VII. Never switch off the engine while stopping at a traffic signal.

Added to this is the need to raise awareness on the part of individual citizen and administration for becoming alert of their respective roles in maintaining a system capable of ensuring adequate safety.

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Annexure:

Table 1.1 The trends of no of accidents(2007-2014)

year	no of accident
2007	2396
2008	2812
2009	2789
2010	2843
2011	3133
2012	3937
2013	3999
2014	4017

Source- Kolkata traffic police

Table 1.2 Gender and age wise accident pattern

Age Structure	No of injury	
	Male	Female
Below 18 Years	104	37
18-31	537	90
31-50	673	115
Above 50	312	86

Source- Kolkata traffic police

Table 1.3 Vehicle-wise accident pattern

Types of vehicle	No of death and injury
Bus	564
Motor cycle	278
Taxi	284
Goods vehicle	452
Others	56

Source- Kolkata traffic police

Ecological Values: Shallow & Deep

Surajit Das

Abstract:

'Ecology' is an interdisciplinary science which studies the diverse interactions of living beings, both to its organic and inorganic environment. The great Norwegian environmental philosopher, Arne Naess points out two different strands in contemporary environmental movement, such as 'shallow ecology' and 'deep ecology'. Shallow ecology holds that the environmental crisis can all be technologically resolved. Shallow ecology keeps faith in scientific management and the continuation of existing industrial societies, so it is limited to the anthropocentric moral framework. It proposes that men would not accept any significant change of their traditional lifestyle. But deep ecology proposes a major reshuffling of our worldviews, cultures and lifestyles consistent with the new ecological perspective. It aims at preserving the integrity of nature for its own sake, irrespective of its benefits to any privileged species like humans. It is based on this conviction that the Earth 'does not belong to humans'. Rather we have to change our lifestyles, if required. Hence, Ecological values are anthropocentric and eco-centric. The present paper is an attempt to study about ecological values, mainly shallow and deep with special emphasis on Naess.

Key Words: Ecology, Arne Naess, Slallow ecology, Deep ecology, Values

Ecological values are one kind of 'moral' values. Ecological values involve the values of individual and communities of things and beings, and their interactions. Ecology is an interdisciplinary science which studies the diverse interrelations of living beings, both to its organic and inorganic environment. The word 'ecology' comes from the Greek word 'oikos', meaning household, home, or place to live. Hence, ecological values are anthropocentric and eco-centric as well.

I

In his renowned article "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement: A Summary" (published in *Inquiry* in 1973), Arne Naess basically points out two different strands in contemporary environmental movement. One he calls 'shallow ecology' and the other 'deep ecology'.

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Shallow ecology holds that the environmental crisis can all be technologically resolved. Shallow approach keeps faith in technological optimism, economic growth, scientific management, and the continuation of existing industrial societies, so it is limited to the traditional and anthropocentric moral framework. It also presupposes that men would not accept any significant change of their traditional lifestyle. The supporters of shallow ecology think that reforming human relations towards nature can be done within the existing structure of society. It does not challenge the philosophical presuppositions and fundamental validity of the industrial social paradigm of reality. Naess said, "Its concerns are relatively local and selective, only for the health and affluence in the developed countries".[1]

Deep ecology proposes a major reshuffling of our worldviews, cultures and lifestyles consistent with the new ecological perspective. It aims at preserving the integrity of nature for its own sake, irrespective of its benefits to any privileged species like humans. It is based on this conviction that the Earth 'does not belong to humans'.[2] Rather we have to change our lifestyles, if required. Hence, deep ecology transcends the limit of any particular science of today, including systems theory and scientific ecology.

For the shallow thinkers, the resources of Earth belong exclusively to the human beings who have the technology to exploit them. Here the resources are valuable only as resources for humans. For the supporters of deep ecology, no natural object should conceive as mere resource for humans. Naess's deep ecology initiates an eco-centric approach in contemporary environmentalism, rather than a platform for consideration merely of isolated life-forms of local situations.

Shallow ecology may be concerned about (human) over-population in developing and underdeveloped countries, but may not be worried about over-population in an industrially developed country. Deep ecology moves forward with a definite universal goal. It puts emphasis not only on stabilizing human population, but also of reducing it to a sustainable minimum by humane means, which do not require violence or dictatorship. In shallow approach, one may condone or may applaud population increase in one's own (developed) country for short-sighted economic, military and for other purposes. An increase in number of humans may be considered as valuable in itself or as economically profitable. Deep ecology recognizes that excessive pressure on planetary life stems from the human population explosion. Hence, population reduction should be given the highest priority in all societies, be it developed, developing, or underdeveloped.

The shallow approach toward pollution seeks higher technology to purify air and water. In deep approach, pollution is evaluated from a total biospheric point of view. Its supporters do not focus exclusively on its effects on human life and health, but rather on planetary life as a whole. They are committed to the view that it is our responsibility to save the nature for both present and future generations, be they human or non-human. Naess said, "The aim…is not a slight reform of our present society, but a substantial reorientation of our whole civilization".[3]

Hence, deep ecology is actually founded on two basic ideas. *One* is a scientific insight into the interrelatedness of various systems of life on the Earth, together with the rejection of anthropocentrism as a misguided way of seeing things. The *second* basic idea of deep ecology is the need for 'Self-realization'. Instead of identifying with our small individual egos or merely with our immediate families, we should learn to identify ourselves with all animals and plants, i.e., ultimately with the whole ecosphere.[4]

II

In order to integrate his deep ecology, Naess formulates seven basic principles.[5] These basic principles of deep ecology are as follows:

1. **Rejection of the 'man-in-environment' image in favor of the relational, total-field image:** According to Naess's deep ecology, organisms are knots in the biospherical net or field of intrinsic relations. An intrinsic relation is defined here as relation between two things A and B such that the relation belongs to the basic constituents of A and B, and as such, without the relation, A and B are no longer the same things. The total-field approach dissolves the 'man-in-environment' concept. Instead, it draws a relational, total-field image based on metaphysical interrelatedness of things and beings.
2. **Biospherical egalitarianism 'in principle':** Deep ecology believes in biospheric egalitarianism. It means all biotic communities, including abiotic nature, have equal right to live and blossom. The 'in principle' clause is later inserted, as it was felt that any realistic praxis necessitates some killing, exploitation, and suppression. We have no right to destroy other living beings without sufficient reason.
3. **Diversity and symbiosis:** Diversity increases the level and potentiality of survival, thereby enhancing novelty and richness of life-forms. Naess said, "To maximize Self-realization we need maximum diversity and maximum symbiosis".[6] 'Symbiosis'

means living in harmony with other fellow members. We should remember that 'live and let live' is more powerful ecological policy than 'either you or me'.

4. **Anti-class posture:** It is sometimes thought that the enhancement of life-quality of humans depends on suppression and exploitation of other life forms. But contemporary ecological investigations demonstrate that this mode of thinking is wrong, rather symbiosis enhances the potentialities of survival, the chances of new mode of life, and the richness of forms. In contrast, the class posture adversely affects their potentialities of Self-realization.
5. **Fight against pollution and resource depletion:** In the fight against pollution and resource depletion shallow ecologists find a lot of supporters. But their attempts do not comply with the 'total stand' when they focus on pollution and resource depletion of a country or of a locality in isolation, without taking other related matters seriously. When projects are implemented to reduce pollution, the project-managers do not take other associated problems into account that might surface. Naess rejects such shallow ecological stand, and advocates for sustainable policies of deep ecology.
6. **Complexity, not complication:** Deep ecology makes a distinction between what is really complicated without any unifying principle and what is merely complex. Multiple factors may be operative to form a unity. But when we fail to find the unifying principle then it seems to us to be complicated. In ecological matters, due to our gigantic ignorance of the biospheric interrelationships, we often mistake the complex as complication, and try to get rid of the complex.
7. **Local autonomy and decentralization:** The vulnerability of a life-form is roughly proportional to the weight of influences from outside the local region in which that form has obtained an ecological equilibrium. But the efforts to strengthen local autonomy presuppose an impetus towards decentralization. Pollution problems, including those of thermal pollution and recirculation of materials, also lead us in this direction.

III

Along with George Sessions and others, Naess has set up a deep ecology platform. This platform is based on following points:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves (intrinsic value).

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 substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living.
8. Those who subscribe the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

IV

Naess identified his own eco-philosophy as Ecosophy-T. Here the letter 'T' refers to Tvergastein, a mountain-hut where he lived for a long period keeping in direct touch with the nature. He read Spinoza, Gandhi and wrote many of his favourite books and articles at this mountain-hut. Hence, the title reflects a personal orientation towards nature.

Naess suggests that everyone should develop his own philosophy. To develop one's personal ecosophy is to articulate one's ultimate values and philosophy of life as an earth dweller. It does not mean that anyone has to agree on all the points and with all eco-philosophers. He said, "You are not expected to agree with all of its value and paths of derivation, but to learn the means of developing your own systems or guides, say Ecosophies X, Y, or Z. Saying your own does not imply that the ecosophy is in any way an original creation by yourself. It is enough that it be a kind of total view which you feel at home with, where you philosophically belong".[7]

A person's ecosophy may well be based on a traditional culture, or a religion, such as Hinduism. But to practice that personal ecosophy, we must have a comprehensive understanding of ourselves, contexts and relationships with fellow beings, the values that guide us, the commitments we honour and the compassion we show and live. The development of ecosophy is demonstrated by Naess through the following chart:

Level I	Ultimate Premises	Taoism, Christianity, Ecosophy-T, etc.
Level II	Platform Principles	Peace Movement, Deep Ecology Movement, Social Justice Movement, etc.
Level III	Policies	A, B, C, etc.
Level IV	Practical Actions	W, X, Y, etc.

Here we can find that a high level of cross-cultural agreement is possible in Level II, the level of platform principles. In Level I, we can articulate our own ecosophies of our choice. That means, this Level I is based on one's own belief-system, such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, or may be from an indigenous culture and tradition, or even from one's own very personal eco-intuitions, as in case of Naess's Ecosophy-T. In Level II, there may also be peace movement, social justice movement, etc. simultaneously with deep ecology movement. From this Level II we can drive specific policy formulations and recommendations, as policies A, B, C, etc. that constitute Level III. Such Level III applications lead us to practical actions at Level IV. At Level III and Level IV, there is a considerable diversity. In the process of derivation we move towards the platform and develop policies and practical actions. But the ecological policies may vary with changing natural conditions. Hence, Naess's Ecosophy-T may be summarized into following points:

1. The narrow self (ego) as against the Comprehensive Self.
2. Self-realization as the realization of the Comprehensive Self.
3. The process of identification as the basic tool of widening the self and a natural consequence of increased maturity.
4. Strong identification with the whole of nature in its diversity, and interdependence of parts as a source of active participation in the deep ecology movement.
5. Identification as a source of belief in intrinsic values.[8]

Later Naess puts Ecosophy-T into one ultimate norm and that is 'Self-realization'. It is a process through which people come to understand themselves as existing in through interconnectedness with the rest of nature.

Similarly, the Indian philosophers focus on a close relation between nature and humanity. It is also said that a perfect human being sees his Self in the nature and the nature in him. And it is interesting to note that even the Western proponent of deep ecology, Arne

Naess, takes refuge in *Advaita* spiritualism. He quotes, in particular, a verse of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The verse is as follows:

Sarvabhūtasthamātmānaṁ sarvabhūtāni cātmani ।
Īkṣate yogayuktātmā sarvatra samadarśanaḥ ॥ (6/29)

That means, he whose Self is harmonized by yoga sees the Self abiding in all beings and all beings in Self, everywhere he sees the same.

V

I may, thus, conclude that though science is all right and scientific development is welcome to resolve the present environmental crisis, but excessive technological practice on Earth actually degrades the ecosphere at large. And it is really alarming not only for the present generation, but also for the future generation as well. Excessive scientific application on Earth not only damages the environment, but it equally barrens everything in the world and thereby transforms this natural Earth into an 'artificial' one.

Environmental Ethics, therefore, looks for a way out of this danger arising out of science. It starts from bio and finally reaches to the deep sense of Self-realization where everyone feels for others, cares for others, loves others and defends others as 'self-thy'. It denies anthropocentrism, because it holds that where there is anthropocentrism, there are classes, ups and downs, dualism, materialism and consumerism. It tries to abolish individualism, subjectivism and instead of that it proclaims universal holism. It holds that as far as natural communities are concerned, humans are in no way superior to others. One's superiority should not be measured in terms of the distinctive property or properties it possesses, but rather on the association of a distinctive whole, i.e., on the basis of a rational whole. Hence, an eco-centric view with a spiritual flavour (strengthened by deep ecological 'Self-realization' or *Advaita* theory of '*samadarśana*') is the only way to protect this natural Earth with its diversity and richness.

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Carpet Sahib, White Sadhu, Conservationist or a Colonial figure: a Postcolonial Critique of Jim Corbett's *My India*.

Tathagata Chanda

Abstract:

The name of James Edward Corbett immediately brings to mind the picture of a white hunter, in shorts, carrying a rifle in his arms and roaming fearlessly into the dark and deep forest of Northern India. But there is more to this man, apart from being just a 'hunter'. He was a popular writer, conservationist, a major in the army and a man who cared much for the poor of India. However, ink is spilled only over Jim Corbett's biography, whereas an analysis of his work could reveal new areas of interest. This paper intends to analyze Corbett's works with special reference to *My India* from a postcolonial point of view. Postcolonial literary theory re-examines colonial literature, through a specific critical lens, concentrating upon the social discourse that took place between the colonizer and the colonized that formed the literature of that particular age.

Key Words: Hunter, Conservationist, Postcolonial, Colonizer, Colonized.

The 2006 *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* uses the term 'colonialism' to describe the process of European settlement and political control over the rest of the world, including the Americas, Australia, and parts of Africa and Asia. It undertakes the task of differentiating between the concepts of colonialism and imperialism. The study is of the opinion that, from a broader point of view, colonialism can be defined as the European political domination which began from the sixteenth century and ended in the twentieth due to the national liberation movements of the 1960s. So colonialism can be defined as the conquest and control of other people's land and goods.

Modern colonialism did more than extracting tribute, goods and wealth from the countries that it conquered—it restructured the economies of the latter, drawing them into a complex relationship with their own, so that there was a flow of human and natural resources between the colonized and the colonial countries. This flow worked in both directions—slaves and indentured labor as well as raw materials were transported to

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manufacture goods in the metropolis, or in other locations for metropolitan consumption, but the colonies also provided captive markets for European goods.

Ania Loomba, in her book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism,* states that the different approaches of colonialism and imperialism complicate the meaning of the term 'postcolonial', a term that is the subject of an ongoing debate. The complication may arise as it might seem that the age of colonialism is over, since the descendants of once-colonized peoples live everywhere, the entire world is postcolonial. Still the term has been violently contested on many counts. First the prefix 'post' is in itself complex as it implies an 'aftermath' in two senses—temporal, as in coming after, and ideological, as in supplanting. The second implication is what the critics of the term have found contestable: as the inequities of colonial rule have not been erased, it is then perhaps premature to proclaim the demise of colonialism. A country can be both postcolonial (in the sense of being formally independent) and neo-colonial (in the sense of remaining economically and/or culturally dependent) at the same time. It appears that 'postcolonialism' is riddled with contradictions and qualifications far from being a term that can be indiscriminately applied.

James Edward Corbett (25 July, 1875) was born of an Irish ancestry in the town of Nainital in the Kumaon of the Himalaya (now in the Indian state of Uttarakhand). He was the eighth son of Christopher William and Mary Jane Corbett. During the winters the family used to move to the foothills, where they owned a cottage named 'Arundel' in Chhoti Haldwani also known by the name of "Corbett's Village", now it is known as Kaladhungi. One cannot overlook his quality of fellow feeling and companionship. He had risked his own life to save Har Singh from the clutches of a tiger; it is only through his medication that Kunwar Singh recovers from his illness, he had always stood beside his workers at Mokameh Ghat. However, there is another aspect to this man; to understand it one needs to look through the Corbett myth. In spite of, being respected and addressed as a 'white sadhu', by the poor of India, Corbett enjoyed the privileges of being a colonialist. For example, being a white man, he could enter a forest without any license. He was even allowed to shoot birds and small animals, thereby destroying the pre-colonial natural environment; whereas, those who were the locals had to produce a license in order to collect mere fuel. He was generally addressed as 'Carpet Sahib' in the Kumaon district, which is actually a distortion of the word 'Corbett'. The word 'sahib' represents someone superior, someone in or pertaining to power. In colonial India, hunting not only represents a sport but a kind of control, it is a display of the power of the colonizer.

The hunt has always been a metaphor of both rule and display of political practice in either the late British Raj or the sixteenth-century Mughal Empire. The British pursuit of man-eaters confronted feline terror with sovereign might, resulting in securing the bodies and hearts of resistant subjects through spectacles of responsible force. The ritualized pursuit of man-eating tigers by the British Raj, through its officials and soldiers struck fear also in the hearts of wary and non-cooperative colonial subjects. Even the act of fencing the forest in a way displayed the power and authority of the late Raj. The act displayed that they can control both nature and man.

One of the most important and popular books which gives a detail description of not only the geographical landscape of pre-colonial India, but a detailed study of the people, especially the poor people of the Terai and Bhabar region is Jim Corbett's *My India*. This book is also considered by many critics as the semi-autobiography of Jim Corbett. The very title is in itself dubious, due to the application of the word 'My'. This word can signify both the man's love for the country in which he lived and considered it as his own or it can be seen as a possession of the white man; a symbol of power, control due to the result or effect of colonial domination. Nowhere in his works have we found him talking or mentioning a few names about the rich in India, apart from those who are directly related to his hunting expeditions. People usually feel more powerful by calling others poor. It gives them the status as well as power of the master. Was Corbett's view similar to this? Or, was he simply enjoying the power of the white man that he had gained from birth by belonging to a white family? These are some of the questions that my paper aims to pose and tries to analyze them keeping apart the man and focusing only on the colonizer.

Jim Corbett had taken employment with the Bengal and North Western Railway. And after working as a fuel inspector for eighteen months he was posted to Mokameh Ghat in Bihar, as a Trans-shipment Inspector. The railway had agreed to pay Corbett on a weekly basis so that he in turn could pay his workers. However, the railway delayed their payments most of the time and Corbett would run short of his small capital. But the work had never stopped for even a single day during his entire tenure. During these hard times, he always had the support of his men, the poor of India. His men were totally loyal to him; they had even worked at a stretch for ninety-five days without any holiday. And at times they had eaten only once a day, but never had they complained. In spite of all these, when it came to festivities, neither any Hindu nor any Muslim festival was observed at Mokameh Ghat. Only Christmas was observed with due respect. The colonial man allowed only the celebration of

his religion. And everyone took part in it. Now whether they took part in it willingly or not Corbett had remained silent on this matter. A few questions can be raised here; did he pay money to his workers so that they most willingly observe Christmas? Or was it mandatory for all to observe Christmas? Religion has always played an important role as far as colonialism is concerned. Whatever might be the scenario all of Corbett's headmen and laborers would wear new clothes on that particular day, no matter how dirty they all were during the rest of the year. The office and its surroundings would be given a gay and festive appearance with flags and strings of marigold along with jasmine flowers. Jim Corbett in the chapter titled "Life at Mokameh Ghat" from the book, *My India* has described the celebration of Christmas in the following lines:

> We at Mokameh Ghat observed no Hindu or Mohammedan holidays, for no matter what the day work had to go on. There was, however, one day in the year that all of us looked forward to with anticipation and great pleasure, and that day was Christmas. On this day custom ordained that I should remain in my house . . . with these flags and strings of marigold and jasmine flowers, Ram Saran and his band of willing helpers, working from early morning, had given . . . in front of the table were the railway staff, my headmen, and all my labourers, And all were dressed in clean clothes, for no matter how dirty we were during the rest of the year, on Christmas Day we had to be clean. (191)

Mahesh Rangarajan in his essay, "Five Nature Writers" from the book *An Illustrated History of Indian Literature in English* proclaims, "Corbett was a sport hunter long before he took to the pursuit of marauding leopards and tigers. He remained a hunter even after he gave up the trial of such animals. The pride of a sportsman is often evident in his accounts and it is erroneous to suppose, as many people do, that he only shot man-eaters" (Rangarajan 351). The aura of the forest and the adventures of the hunt have been portrayed effectively by Corbett, the writer. His empathy towards the natives of Kumaon and Garhwal helped construct a modest image of himself. However, Corbett's reputation is a dubious one; in fact, he belonged to the imperial class. The Corbett myth has been deconstructed by recent scholars in environmental history. Though, we must keep in mind that, during his time environmental issues were not given much importance. However, it would also be wrong to continue calling him solely a conservationist. Strangely Corbett is silent about the peasant unrests and agitations that, for example, took place in the regions of Kumaon and Garhwal. These unrests which took place in the first part of the twentieth century, was due to the

discontent against the forest department's felling of trees and fencing of forests. From his book *Jungle Lore,* we come to know how overwhelmed and elated Corbett was having killed his first leopard with a rifle. The joy that he felt can only be compared to that of a hunter making his first kill; and not that of a conservationist.

Corbett had once killed a Himalayan bear; by burying an entire blade into the poor animal's skull. This act of killing a bear with an axe shows how ruthless he was as a hunter. In all these experiences, the killing was not mixed with regret. Apart from his hunting, Corbett had organized many tiger hunts for VIPs and Maharaja's. He had high regards for His Highness the Maharaja of Jind, who is known to be one of the finest sportsmen in India. Corbett had helped him track and kill a fine tiger, which the Maharaja was trying to shoot for the last three years. In his *Jungle Lore,* Corbett gave a detailed account of that particular tiger hunt. He seems to be proud and pleased of the fact, that the tiger was named after him. Corbett had also organized hunting trips for the Viceroy of India, Lord Linlithgow and his family. There is no sign of his compassion towards the animals of the forest; the self proclaimed conservationist and nature lover is nowhere to be found. His loyalty towards the British Government and its officials was stronger than his deep love and regard for the tiger. Thus Corbett was responsible for intervening into the forest life and hampering the ecological balance.

Corbett used to stay at East Africa for three months every year. He would camp in the African bushes and hunt lions and other games available. Interestingly Corbett is silent about these hunts in his adventurous narratives. One possible reason for this silence is that none of these animals were man-eaters; and the butchering of these animals stood in sharp contrast to the common belief that he only shot to kill man-eaters and had rescued the natives from its terror. The persistence of the Corbett myth is the result of our failure to understand the ideological constructions of nature and wildlife. And the myth will continue unless we learn to analyze Corbett critically.

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