

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL DEPICTION OF INDIA BY INDIAN PROSE WRITERS

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Philosophy in India has a legacy much longer and perhaps profounder than elsewhere. The several trends of philosophy such as the *darsanas*, both *astika* and *nastika* have had a long interchange so as to depart us with no untainted philosophic structure to-day. Whatever *darsanas* today maneuver as self-regulating *darsanas* divulge one momentous fact, explicitly they materialize to be abstractions. The deliberation of the extant sutras of each *darsana* reveals the horrendous picture of ‘cold storage’ of the *darsanas* other than two: specifically materialism (*carvaka*) and *Vedanta*.

The basic predicament of philosophy to which all philosophical belief has been aimed at has been the problem of freedom which was recognized as more essential in a sense than the problem of reality. Reality and Freedom are the twin fundamentals of Philosophic investigation and accomplishment. Thus the essential concept of Indian Philosophical thinking (including the hedonistic freedom of the *Carvaka*) has been Reality-Freedom, Truth is something not merely to be known but incredible to be lived and entered into.

This being the broad-spectrum nature of Indian Philosophical tradition, any endeavor to break up the two spheres as western Philosophy has been trying to do is foredoomed to failure. Psychologically as well as in any way it is not viable to speak of a reality that is inert and is claimed to be forceful only in the sagacity of static enthusiasm of the mechanical observation of life. This seems to be the ancient realization in India exposed in the twin concepts of *Moksa* and Reality which are essential to each other.

Our current quandary is whether this acquaintance is undeniably helpful to us at present. There is no disbelief that by some means the mechanical or mechanistic beginning of reality has immovable the thoughts of the mass of the people. This is not surprising at all for the reason that other factors such as economic security and industrial impending and prospect of economical and social meliorisms through the instrumentality of scientific inventions have distorted the attitude towards the problems of Reality and Value. Indeed even this is undoubtedly seen to be associated up with the perception of freedom. It is freedom that is determining the concept of reality and thought of value. Thus it is in the course of the concept of Freedom that we could link up the two great adventures of Reality-Value and Scientific-Economic-Value. This could be but the reformulation of the ancient dualism of *Mukti-purushartha* and *Kamyartha Purushartha*. This duality has the double power of amalgamation and crumbling – the dialectical opposition being the lower assimilation whereas dialectical subsumption through law is the power of higher assimilation.

Reconstruction can ensue either from the stand-point of the acquisitive mechanistic end or from the unrealistic freedom conserving and promoting end. Of course to-day we are confronted with the double re-enactment. This is something that cannot be helped, for Philosophy aims at a ample understanding of the totality of reality, however flecked Reality may be in itself.

The spiritual stance is the experience of the axiological status of Reality as Freedom. The materialistic attitude is equally an axiological one but it is freedom of the materialistic hedonistic life. The concepts of *Iha* and *Para* exemplify the double synthesis that is being sought, through a twofold recognition of the value of Reality. In Philosophy too, the metaphysical problem regrettably has been unfocused to one of Monism or Absolutism, and *Advaita* has been exalt to the status of the highest – the other formulations being painstaking to be the compromises with the imperfect. This inevitably does not follow. The problem of Reality is not the problem of pragmatism. This has been obviously seen by the *Vedantic* thinkers who have claimed that the other schools of *Vedanta* have as unfailling an account of Reality as any absolutistic view can be – particularly when such absolutism is fused with Illusionisms and phenomenalisms.

Philosophy itself has had to turn decisive about its own instruments of knowledge. This important turn is indeed the standing point of *pramana-sastra*. The fixing of the limits of each *pramana* is the prelude feature of philosophical thinking; training in them is the condition of all types of knowledge. The moderately present and postulated in respect of the knowledge granted by these different *pramanas* is not to be taken as affecting the soundness of their synthesis a fatal fallacy of the illusionist view being accurately this allegation that truths of the perceptual order are relative truths. Once we grant that they are true within limits, nothing should later be done to deny them that too. Some philosophers have realized this but others have elapsed this healthy moderation in their oversimplification of illusion. That is the reason why enthusiastic assertions of the discoverers of the instinctive Experience have been met by equal vehemence from the methodological realists, who consider that Reality though one is merged of all types of realities, hierarchically prearranged and incorporated to form a single system directed by the Highest Spirits and maintained and continual by that Spirit.

The conflicts amid the *pramanas* – and therefore between the *premeyas* – is referred to the nature of the *pramanas* themselves – intellect versus perception, intelligence versus perception and perception versus intuition, and intuition versus revelations etc. The history of Indian Philosophy is a series of movements of deliberation seeking diverse formulations if not solutions to the predicament of Metaphysics on the one hand and life on the other. Measured in this way it would be possible to restructure our entire commencement of reality not independent of experience – familiarity being part and bundle of that reality – but as exhibiting itself in and through the different levels of experience.

We have seen that *Sadhana* involves self-formulations conversely guided and helped and canalized by the *Sadhya* : ( the goal) and these self-formulations discover the planes and purposes of the different facets of the one indissoluble Reality. Philosophizing and *Sadhana* cannot be compartmentalized and severely fixed to theoretical and the sensible spheres of Reality. It is specifically this occurrence that we witness in the lives of the saints as well as Philosophers; their theory and practice weave a faultless garment. *Sadhana* indeed helps reorientation or renovation. Ages of speculative doings are succeeded by ages of spiritual bustle and practical reconstruction of spiritual and economic life depends on this two-fold stability of processes.

The renovation of experience has become essential not only because of its inexorableness, thanks to the steady collision of the two worlds or planes of the academic and the

sensible or ideal and the definite or *Jnana* and *Karma (dharma)*, but also because no perception however eminent can just stand untouched or unmodifiably during history. The charge that such reconstructions with new verbal characteristics could be either old wine in new bottles or self-delusive cannot be avoided in all those cases where there is new insight into reality – a new vision of reality or the perception of a new factor in reality.

For the large mass of mankind thoughtless to any new development, trying to acclimatize the world to their old fangled notions or struggling to adapt to the new world, it is perhaps superfluous to toy with the idea of philosophies. But we now are witnessing somewhat a new tempo of human activity and this is universal and predictable. The shape of the development of the mind has now become such that it is uncomfortable excepting when it becomes aware of the larger challenges. We cannot dismiss the problem of Reality as the Unreal.

The writers to the volume unrestricted existing Indian Philosophy edited by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan show us one way by which they had reinterpreted to themselves the philosophies of Ancient India chiefly the *Vedanta*. This reinterpretation though made by the Indian mind was in the main through the western medium of rational philosophy. These philosophies The Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo can be said to have in use its stand on what we may call the vital realization of the Reality in all its planes of expression and experience. It may well be experienced in a single pulse of Spiritual *Anubhava*. It is the experience that has been prophesied and inculcated by the Vedic Seer and more. It is not merely a rewording but a reconstruction of the ancient unity of familiarity of the One-Many, Changeless – Change, Process and Progress and Purpose, Individual – Universal, and Social, *Nirguna* and *Saguna*, Personal and Impersonal, Ethical and the Supra ethical, and so on.

The integralism of Sri Aurobindo reveals an insight into the primary Nature of Reality as Existence, as astuteness and as Delight. It is possible to show that Sri Aurobindo's reconstructive insight is richer and profounder than the best of the modern Eastern and the Western thinkers. Definitely it may well be clear to any one that all the past is preserved and distorted in the framework of the Integral Philosophy. Dr. S.K. Maitra had indeed demonstrated the advances and modifications made in the several concepts of Western philosophy by Sri Aurobindo and how it shows the universalism of Sri Aurobindo's thought.

Correspondingly we could obviously see that certain lines of thinking have been sophisticated by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. The merit of Sri Aurobindo's approach is that this insight is claimed to be derivative from the dynamic status of the Super mind. This transcendental perception of evolutionary power and plenitude is lacking in the others, for this power is granted in a transmutive sense to the Ultimate Spirit or Person in the other and earlier philosophies and *sadhanas*. Prof. Malkani actually holds that there is no need to presume the Super mind, as the Absolute Spirit or rational instinct is enough to explain transcendence; Intellectual intuition is a hybrid however, since it cannot dole out with the two fold forms of Reality as noumenal and phenomenal. It would not be correct to generate a fundamental dichotomy between intellect and intuition simply because the intellect has taken the route of study and the principle of denial and has later attempted the synthesis on the basis of dialectic.

It is obligatory to highlight this aspect of the future opportunity. The position taken by the exponents of the opposition between intellect and intuition is that philosophy is the attempt to explain reality in terms of the intellect and its fortuitous mode of finite precision through the logic of the principle of contradiction, consistency and so on. The metaphysics of finite logic has been found to lead one nowhere. It is a dragon that slays the action, the creative being. It is necessary to instruct understanding with the logic of the inestimable – the Real – the thing-in-

itself – which is grasped unquestionably by the knowledge of the transcendental *Saccidananda*. But where many see the end of philosophy, we have to see the beginnings of a new philosophy reconstructed by the understanding now laden with the logic of the endless.

Therefore it is clear that we are at the moment in a position to start a careful reconstruction of the Indian Philosophical schools or Indian Philosophy itself that is based on the Logic of the Infinite and the Infinite Experience. Not simply has Knowledge not come to an end with being but it is itself being that is the resourceful Infinite. This is the inner dynamics of the Super mind. Philosophy in this New Key is yet to be completely uttered.

Of late it has been converted into a fashion to denounce all that is traditional. This inclination started with the new independence that India has begun to enjoy. The entire past of India has been previously studied and though much of it was fashionable it was felt that this ‘discovery of India’ left out appreciably any part from the past. Of course science in India died long ago and philosophy which survived, survived only as a relic of a great past, but without any promise of life in the future.

Jainism also renounced desire for life as desire. Desire is essentially individual and restricting and binding and its effects have the nature of habituating man to a life of burden to them. Even food and family and friendships have this binding nature and materialization of man. Its deep spiritualism entailed the leaving behind of all extra. Pessimism is writ large in so far as it states the problem of sorrow and bondage and materialism clearly as the content of the life of man, and to get rid of this is enviable.

Herein lays the sanguinity and good news that man can give up the life of sorrow and attain a life of beatitude by repudiation of the life of desire. Renunciation of life-values of man is the only means towards the realization of true beatitude. Not in this perspective of life can man realize his freedom and his true undiminishing happiness. Knowledge of desire’s processes and goals is obligatory to renounce desire itself. To turn desire Godward or towards freedom inevitably leads to leaving behind of it in its usual manifestation as the accomplishment of the needs and demands of the body and society.

The pessimism distinctive of this disposition is definitely in respect of this world, the world of matter and man. The optimism is in respect of the other-world accomplishment where the problems of this world are said to be liquidated. The consciousness of men was knowledgeable to look forward to another world as the goal of our present endeavors. This indisputably leaves the field of our religious thinking mainly pessimistic in respect of our present condition. Could not change in the values of life work out a better panorama; man must be changed; his ego has to be modified and subordinated to the Over self or God; his nature itself undergo change in order to be able to see more than his senses see and his desires timely; a new kind of desire free from unawareness and restraint is the *satya-samkalpa* or divine will that will be the feature of the greater man. It is not unfeasible to have such a being on this earth. If this is possible then the pessimism could be counteracted. But men are offering resistances and indeed one of the most optimistic experiments made has been to bring down heaven to earth, to make or transform earth to the status of heaven dreamt of. The Kingdom of God on earth must be a compeer of that of His in Heaven – this dream is undeniably of capital importance in the hope of a new world and a new man. A survey of the whole range of Indian philosophical systems reveals that this great ambition and dream is not held to be competent of being achieved in this earth-consciousness. This is definitely pessimism.

The aim of all philosophical systems excepting the Carvaka materialist is *moksha* or liberation of the individual soul from the burden to the world of demonstration and society, for

these are fields of misery rather than of freedom, fields of pleasure trailed by pain. The social organization consequently was prejudiced towards escape from the world to the enduring world beyond or even to nothingness if it destined that.

It appears therefore that pessimism is the reigning attitude to life. No one tries to make the world a better place to live in even during the period of unstable stopover in it, but it should be said every endeavor is made to make life here depressed, unhappy than it is, so that one could try hard to escape from it even before the selected span. Life is hard and made more hard, and for the spiritual man these are preceding indications that he is beloved of God: they are boons and gifts of God ripening his wisdom towards renunciation-*vairagya* and *jnana*. Even Yoga or God-union is said to be impracticable apart from through *sannyasa*. This leads to aloofness from all attachments and produces a person who acts distantly on the basis of the law of *dharma* or renunciation of fruits if not of all *karma*.

Pluralism is also the philosophy of individualism and democracy. However it also tends to get over the hard procedure of self-government by giving up or renouncing the job of government to a leader either by a agreement or by a gathering or by just a itinerary of habit of fair-mindedness in the affairs of the world into the hands of a sovereign or a living God who is a delegate of God the celestial creator or any clique or coterie. The nonconformist commencement of society provides for the equal augmentation of every individual. His society must provide for growth and not merely for the defense of the abstract liberty of each individual.

The social consequences of the illusionistic philosophy have already been stated in the approach. So long as the social four order arrangement is not seriously threatened, it does not matter what a man seeks or does or strives after. Once liberty is secure so long as one does not break the laws of the conventional society built up on the principles of society order, truth, justice, non-violence, chastity, and other virtues of Indian ethical or social life, no one is bothered about society. The *yamas* of Yoga are not only for the *mumuksu* but also for the *bubhuksu*.

The only view that may help to get to the bottom of the social fruition and elasticity or freedom would be the organic view of the reciprocally harmonizing opposites or polar opposites operating incessantly to maintain a dynamic growth along with symmetry of what today passes for homeostatic. The world and the individuals interlocked in polar opposition are with dynamism modifying each other, in releasing the divine potentialities of matter or nature and the divine potentialities of each individual soul under the concept of the one divine immanent in booth as their self or Ideal. They have been thrown mutually to bring out the cosmic meaning of being, the intrinsic freedom in all the three. This solves the problems of pluralism as well as holism. It cannot be said that this has been worked out in the context of a politico-social organization but it was verily worked out by Ramanuja in the context of temple organization and his hierarchy of God-hood or statuses of God-as magnificent, as cosmic, as heroic, as inner ruler, and as the loving image or icon of infinite radiation in Matter.

A temple centered culture has more significance for social dynamics than perhaps the modern temple, the industrial estate. But then all arts and sciences could be molded to bring out the eternal consequence of liberation and freedom not only here but also beyond. If in the past the freedom was sought away from because of its richness in infinite measure, in the present it has to be sought here for this too is the inevitability in God's Universe.

In conclusion I would like to say that every philosophy as a view of reality entails a practical aspect. Some Philosophies deny a practical aspect for they assert their 'contemplative' attitude as all-sufficient. They however accept a sensible aspect for attaining the pensive state

and all social institutions are serviceable to bring about this practical process or ethic to promote the theory of contemplation or *dhyana* or meditation which is said to promote the disentanglement from Nature and promote liberation.

There are others who hold that after one attains a philosophy the practical may be said to be the outcome of the theory. It is the technique or art that expresses the freedom-this is the material freedom, a freedom in and not a freedom from, a freedom in and though. Society as a vale of soul making is one view, society as the *kshetra* of freedom or gnostic *yoga* is another. They however are not conflicting though both cannot be practiced by the same person. The uniqueness of any individual lies in his different fitness or *adhikara*.

The social organization in ancient times did provide guide lines. Since that organization has undergone sea changes what is needed is a rethinking on institutions today all over the world. Vedanta has shown three major lines, the pluralistic, absolutistic and the organistic and they could be synthesized where there is a will towards freedom and suppleness.

The object is impressive 'felt' to be substance and inert and inactive though here again we come to see that it is not necessary for it can encourage the subject by such characteristics as striking quality, contrast and concentration. However though the object is an object because it is known by a subject and perhaps it may be claimed that the characteristics of an object are only slanted responses to it and not in the object as such as qualities or characteristics, the subject is important for without him there is not practice at all. Experience means the subjects' experience, conscious trepidation of objects other than itself but yet not autonomously of it. Having divided the real of reality into two as subject and object it was easy to develop this dualism.

Indian philosophers had a long tradition of penetrating for the Infinite Reality. Their first attempts have been fundamental research in many directions. Broadly speaking they probed the general regions of man's terrestrial globes to find out the basic substance out of which all elements in Nature have come into being. They sought for that one substance which constitutes the inward psychic being in one and all. They also sought to discover the One God who might be considered to be Maker, the Original Being, who had become the deities of the several areas of Nature, man and activities of the entire worlds above, here, and below. The fidelity needed for this enterprise was of a rare and arduous quality.

The basic concept of Reality as away from all predications and beyond all *pramanas* or sources and ways of significant made it impossible to have or attain Reality except by losing oneself and all in it. The logical description of transcendence in terms of language or rite became also impossible. If Void or Nihil meant this unfeasibility of appearance or familiarity or both, then metaphysics would be not viable, though *Advaita Vedanta* could not accept this termination.

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