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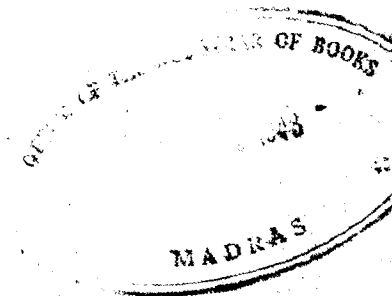
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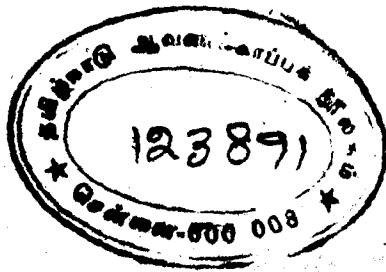
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Does Rāmānuja admit Identity-in-difference?

BY

PROF. D. M. DATTA

Rāmānuja's conception of the relation between the self and God is a veritable 'Serbonian bog' which allows no easy footing to any well-known logical category (such as identity, difference and identity-in-difference). While refuting Śaṅkara's view that this relation is one of identity (abheda), he emphasizes so much the difference between the self and God that the reader would be quite justified to suppose that according to Rāmānuja the relation is one of difference (bheda).¹ This supposition is further confirmed when one reads his commentary on Bādarāyaṇa's sūtra (2.1.22) which points out that Brahman is other than the embodied self. But the impression is reversed when one reads his commentary on the sūtra (2.1.15) teaching the non-difference (ananyatva) of the world (including the Jīvas) from its cause Brahman. He thus seems to support two contradictory views.

This conflict disappears, however, when we read his commentary on the sūtra (2.3.422) which states that the individual self is a part of Brahman. For, Rāmānuja clearly says there that if the self is regarded as a part of Brahman we can reconcile the two opposite kinds of teachings of the revealed texts and of the aforesaid sūtras, namely that there is difference (bheda), and that there is also identity (abheda) between the two. In short, as there are both difference and identity (bhedābheda) between the part and the whole, so also is there a similar relation between the self and God.

1. Vide Sribhāṣya, 1. 1. 1. passim.

It is reasonable to conclude then that according to Rāmānuja, in different respects, there are different kinds of relations between the self and God. In so far as the self is finite and subject to imperfection, and God is just the opposite in nature, there is difference; in so far as the self is inseparable from God who is its inner substance (ātmā) there is identity (abheda or ananyatva or tādātmya)²; but as the self is a part of God, both identity and difference are tenable. This is the final impression created by Rāmānuja's writings on many competent readers, among whom there is no less an authority than Mādhavācārya, who says in the *Sarvadarśana-saṅgraha* that Rāmānuja believes in all kinds of relations, bheda, abheda, and bhedābheda, in different respects.

But unfortunately even this well-founded conclusion regarding Rāmānuja's view receives a rude shock from his rather surprising statements here and there in which he launches a whole-sale attack on all the three kinds of philosophers who advocate respectively identity (abheda), difference (bheda) and identity-in-difference (bhedā-bheda).³ The reader is thus swept away even from the last foot-hold and is left wondering whether the writer who repeatedly demolishes his position, as soon as established, knows his own mind; and whether his sole purpose is only to destroy the positions of others without constructing any of his own.

One can understand why Rāmānuja should reject unqualified identity (abheda) or difference (bheda); but it is difficult to see why he criticizes even the theory of identity-in-difference (bhedā-bheda), if he himself advocates that both difference and identity, as taught by the scriptures, are real. It appears that in criticizing the advocates of bhedā-bheda he has two classes of them in mind, (1) those who hold that the self is nothing but Brahman *imagined* as limited by some extraneous or accidental adjunct (upādhi)—just as the space of the room is nothing but the all-pervasive space imagined as limited by the room; and (2) those who hold that the self is but a mode of Brahman who has *really* assumed a finite form.⁴ In respect of the former, Rāmānuja's objection is that as they hold that the self is *really* Brahman (the distinguishing limiting adjunct being imaginary), the imperfections of the self would also really belong to Brahman. In respect of the latter, he points out that as Brahman according to them is really reduced to a finite

2. All these words are used by Rāmānuja.

3. Eg. *Sribhāṣya*, 1. 1. 1. (p. 96), 1. 1. 4.

4. *Ibid.* p. 97.

self, he really becomes subject to all the imperfections of the latter. But these objections are obviated, he further points out, by his own theory according to which the conscious souls (cit) and unconscious matter (acit), though possessing different natures (svarūpa) from the all-inclusive Brahman, are eternally and inseparably related to Him as parts to their whole, effects to their material cause, attributes to their substance.

What Rāmānuja struggles to make out is that Brahman never *becomes* in any way a self, any more than the whole *becomes* a part or substance *becomes* an attribute. Brahman is eternally Brahman, and the selves within Him eternally exist as such. But how then Rāmānuja can speak of Brahman as the cause of the jīva (or of matter) if the latter does not *arise* from the former? It would appear that by calling Brahman the cause he does not mean the immediate unconditional *antecedent* but only the material or the substance. God as the ultimate whole of existence (sat) is the substance *eternally* underlying all finites. The whole does not precede the parts, nor do parts succeed the whole. Brahman always exists as a whole possessed of parts, and never *becomes* parts, and therefore does not *become* subject to the imperfections of the parts.

Though it is doubtful whether this analogy of the part and the whole saves Brahman from all imperfections, it would be clear from the above that Rāmānuja's objection is not so much against the relation of identity-in-difference as such (which he himself advocates under *sūtra* 2. 3. 42) but against the particular formulations of it. Identity-in-difference, for him, means, identity of the one substance existing in two real forms ('*ekam eva vastu dvirūpam pratiyate*'⁵, '*prakāra-dvayāvasthitatvāt sāmānādhikaranyasya*'⁶). What he rejects are (1) identity of the one substance *appearing* as two owing to misconception, and (2) identity of the one which *has become* really two. Between the whole and the part there is identity-in-difference, not of any of these last two kinds, but of the first kind. The whole really possesses different parts from which it is always different as a whole, but the same identical whole is also in every part, though it does not become reduced to many (in which case the whole would be divided and cease to be a whole).

It will also be found that in upholding the unity of the substance, and making it the foundation, and in treating multiplicity only as a dependent character of the one, Rāmānuja's emphasis is

5. *Ibid.* p. 150.

6. *Ibid.* p. 94.

on the aspect of identity rather than on that of difference, though he treats both as real.

This view also enables us to distinguish the position of Rāmānuja, from that of Nimbārka, for example, who too believes in a kind of identity-in-difference (bhedā-bheda). As Ghate rightly points out, "Thus we see that the doctrine of Nimbārka has very much in common with that of Rāmānuja, both regard the difference as well as the non-difference as real. But, for Nimbārka, difference and non-difference are on the same level, they co-exist and have the same importance; while for Rāmānuja, non-difference is the principal; it is qualified by difference, which is thus subordinate to it."⁷ This also explains why Rāmānuja's philosophy is called qualified *monism*, rather than qualified dualism or monism-dualism (dvaitādvaita).

The extremely puzzling statements of Rāmānuja, regarding his attitude to identity, difference, and identity-in-difference tempt some writers to avoid the attempt to consider his view in relation to these usual categories of relation; and lead them to hold that Rāmānuja's conception of the relation between self and God, is a category by itself; it is inseparability ('aprthak-sthiti'). But this is merely giving up the game of logical understanding. For, inseparability of existence is itself a vague relation, admitting of various formulations. Even Śaṅkara's conception of the relation between the effect and the cause (ananyatva) can come under this. Besides, logical thought is not silenced by this mere new-fangled name; it requires to understand what this relation means in terms of identity and difference; or, failing this, why this relation defies such affiliation. We have seen above that it is possible to interpret Rāmānuja's conception as one of identity-in-difference of a specific kind, and that he himself accepts this in some places. There is no necessity, therefore, of dodging the issue by resorting to a 'blanket term' (like 'aprthak-sthiti' or 'aprthaksiddhi') which conceals, rather than answers, the difficulty.

7. V. S. Ghate, *The Vedānta*, p. 32.

The Conscious, the Sub-Conscious, the Unconscious, and the Super-Conscious in Psychology

BY

P. S. NAIDU

Allahabad University

Until the great leader of Psycho-analysis, Freud, came on the stage of Psychology, the students of our science were familiar with the conscious and the sub-conscious levels of the human mind, and even then, their knowledge of the sub-conscious was amazingly defective. So, consciousness reigned supreme, and psychology, as we are aware, was defined as 'the science of consciousness'. This was a strictly useless type of introspective psychology which proved barren and incompetent in the face of the great problems presented by sociology. The knowledge of the sub-conscious which these conscious psychologists possessed was confined to the realm of habits, mental and physical, which were sometimes pushed to the neural level, and sometimes presented as puzzles to the pathologist. The Jamesian discussion of the Unconscious (it is really the sub-conscious misnamed the unconscious) in the eighth chapter of his *Principles* is typical of the confusion that reigned in psychology. The advent of Freud has cleared the mist that enveloped psychological thinking, and has revealed the conscious, the sub-conscious and the unconscious in their proper perspective. Anogenetic psychology has rendered great service to the students of human nature by dispelling many of the illusions that beset the path of the psychologist. The greatest service that it has rendered is, of course, the light that it has thrown on the nature of the conscious, the sub-conscious and the unconscious; and to the study of the relation of these three aspects of the human mind to human nature we shall now turn our attention.

We may, subject to the limitations imposed on us by a terminology coined out of a language which is spatial in essence, speak of the three layers or three strata of the human mind—the conscious, the sub-conscious and the unconscious strata. These are arranged in the order mentioned. The conscious level of the mind comprises all those thoughts, feelings and springs of action of which we are aware. When we are conscious, we think, feel and act; and we are also aware that we so think, feel and act. The superficial

analysis of consciousness attempted by James in his study of 'the stream of thought' may be tentatively accepted by us. But what we are aware of at any moment is but a small part of our mental equipment. While discussing a psychological topic, we are not aware of our knowledge of other subjects, philosophical and non-philosophical that we have gained. The systems of ideas and principles that we have organized or built up in these subjects are not consciously present in our mind. But they are there somewhere ready to come up to consciousness if needed. And the whole system of physical skills or bodily habits, is also there, springing up into dynamic activity at a moment's notice if wanted, but lying quiescent when not called upon to serve. All these may be viewed as lodged in the sub-conscious level of the mind. The sub-conscious is thus the repository of all those mental and physical skills which we have taken great pains to acquire, and which now have become part of the habitual equipment of our nature. It is to be noted that the contents of the sub-conscious had their birth or origin in the conscious level of the mind to start with, and then only sank down to the lower level.

How are we to conceive of the unconscious? Freud's contention is that the conscious and the sub-conscious account for one-ninth of the mind, using a figure borrowed from the appearance of a floating ice-berg. Eight-ninths is Unconscious. And this unconscious is dynamic, exercising its influence on the conscious, and controlling apparently our conscious behaviour. Now, the unconscious has been called many unkind names. It has been contended with great show of reason that it is a contradiction in terms. The unconscious is non-existent in the mental realm. These arguments are based on a wilful misinterpretation of the Freudian connotation of the Unconscious. It is too late in the day to pretend to naiveté in the interpretation of the unconscious. We know that Freud has established beyond any shadow of doubt that the unconscious is the storehouse of all those unsocial, ugly, repressed desires which cannot be satisfied, and which generated unresolvable conflicts and finally had to go down to the hidden depths of the mind. They do not lie quiet there, but gathering momentum disturb the conscious level of the mind not only in sleep and dreams, but also in waking life, leading in extreme cases to insane behaviour of a puzzling type. Now the point is this: no one of us is free from the unconscious. There is only one type of person who is free and he is the *jivanmukta*, but then for him the phenomenal mind as such has ceased to count. So, the three levels of the mind as outlined above are present in all of us,

For the first time in the history of psychology the study of the three levels of the mind was undertaken by McDougall and Freud. No one before them had the vision which inspired these two great leaders to undertake a searching analysis of mental structure and function. Mental dynamics as a branch of psychology owes its origin, development and existence to McDougall and Freud. For the present I shall confine myself to that aspect of purposivistic psychology which has a bearing on the four levels of mind mentioned in the title of the paper. McDougall it was who analysed the dynamic structure of the mind into instincts and emotions. He has shown us how these instincts and emotions are organized into sentiments, concrete and abstract, and how these are finally organized after passing through conflicts and crises, into scales of values. The value-scales which may vary at different times display a hierarchical arrangement of sentiments which are the outgrowth of individual experience. The primitive instincts and emotions are not only innate and inherited, but they are racial in operation. There is a certain uniformity in regard to their cognitive, affective and conative aspects and consequently they are stereo-typed. The sentiments on the other hand are individual, acquired and variable in origin and manifestation.

Now the bearing of this McDougallian analysis on the different levels of mind which we are considering is this: the primitive instincts and their concomitant emotions, like the reflexes, belong to the very constitution of our nature, and most of the time they lie and operate below the threshold of consciousness. It is not to be denied, however, that they do under certain conditions rise to the conscious level, and make themselves felt most obtrusively. But a good part of the mechanism of instinct functions sub-consciously. That is as it ought to be in the interests of the general economy of mental life. The purely vegetative or biological functions of life must be taken care of by the levels of mind below consciousness. But man does not live by bread alone. He lives by ideals and values. And the level of mind which deals with the values of life is the McDougallian hormic level of sentiments and sentiment-scales. Desire, hope, ambition, conflict, decision and will have their scenes of activity at this level. The formation of individual character and the development of group culture which McDougallian psychology has analysed beautifully involve conscious effort, volition and decision. And on goes man building sentiments and sentiment-scales, facing crises, resolving them, and conquering fresh fields of character. And all these take place at the conscious level. Now McDougall has pointed out that in this

vast mental architecture the master sentiment of self-regard is the coping store. This self-regard is to be understood in the strictly worldly sense. If this self-regard is to control all that is highest and best in man, then it will be found that the sentiments and sentiment-scales that we take great pains to form, will, like the very complicated habits which we take infinite pains to acquire, sink into the sub-conscious and become mechanical in their action. And some of them may become very wicked and unsocial and then they will go down to the unconscious. Freud has explained to us how this happens. In fact the Freudian complex is nothing but the McDougallian sentiment that has become morbid and unsocial and reprehensible. So, if the psychological process so beautifully analysed and explained by McDougall and Freud is under the control of the economic and unspiritualistic ethical tenets of the West, then that which is conscious will be constantly degenerating into the unconscious. The phenomenon of regression, discussed both by Freud and McDougall, is one instance of the degeneration of mental structure. Under the guidance of the 'ideals' which are of the earth the consciously organized mental patterns of man will either sink to the sub-conscious and become mechanical in their operation, or go down to the unconscious and become abnormal at their very source. Is there no way of lifting the sentiments and sentiment-scales to higher levels. There is, and it is here that the *super-conscious* comes to our aid.

McDougall has shown how through great individual effort the primitive, brutal instincts and emotions are steadily raised to higher levels. The master-sentiment is the great dynamic impelling force in this process of upliftment of the mind. If a proper master-sentiment is chosen then the process of development will not be reversed. What then should be the proper master-sentiment for raising the human mind to the highest conceivable level?

Suggestions for a proper answer to the question have been forth-coming from two psychologists who have attempted to extend McDougall's hormic theory. They are Drs. Garnett and Lundholm. The former in his book "Instinct and Personality" has drawn our attention to the failure on the part of McDougall to explain the great force of the moral and religious sentiments in our mind. He has pointed out the necessity for postulating some other sources of urge to activity than the instinctive. The instinctive end is never ultimate, but always a means to a further end. Every instinctive urge has a point of satiety, while man's nature is such that he must for ever pursue something which satisfies but does not satiate. What then is this that is present in man's mind and yet does not

belong to the instinctive level? It is the desire of the SPIRIT; and this desire manifests itself in the form of three spiritual instincts, the instincts for *truth, beauty and goodness*. As Clutton-Brock says in his *Ultimate Belief*, 'Spirit is a name given by philosophy to that part of us which has certain desires that are not desires of the flesh, and can only be satisfied by different means... The philosophy of the spirit tells us that the spirit desires three things, and desires these for their own sake and not for any further aim beyond them—(truth, beauty and goodness). These three desires, and these alone are the desires of the spirit, and they differ from all other desires in that they are to be pursued for their own sake. If they are pursued for some ulterior end, they change their nature'.

'So the spirit has three activities, and three alone, as it has three desires, namely the moral, the intellectual and the aesthetic activities. And man lives so that he may exercise these three activities of the spirit and for no other reason'.

If we incorporate these ideas into the McDougallian scheme, then we find that Truth, Beauty and Goodness should replace self-regard, and should function as master-sentiments at the highest levels of sentiment organization. But how is this to be done? And moreover these three ideals have been pursued by the West, and yet as the carnage at the battle front demonstrates to us, they have not succeeded in preventing the mind from degeneration to the sub-conscious and unconscious levels. There are certain Western psychological theories of Art and Morality which take great delight in tracing these ideals to the repressed conflicts in the unconscious levels of the mind. Art and Morality are looked upon as manifestations of the Freudian unconscious. So Dr. Garnett's suggestion does not carry us very far. Let us now turn to Dr. Lundholm.

Dr. Lundholm strikes the right note when he speaks of Meta-Psychology of mental activity, right at the very beginning of his book, '*Conation and Our Conscious Life*'. According to this author the basic property of mind is not merely the urge to live, but also to evolve into higher forms of mental life. 'May it not be', asks our author, 'that just as the organism by its physical property is a constituent in an infinite physical continuum, by its mental property it is a constituent in an infinite mental or psychic continuum, and further may it not be that, just as changes in the extrinsic part of the physical continuum can reflect themselves into the body of the organism, changes in the extrinsic part of the mental continuum might reflect themselves into the mind of the organism?'.

Again at the conclusion of his discussion of the nature of the memory continuum our author asks, 'Is there an unknown master

mind which swayed by some supreme urge in one visionary synthesis, embraces this ocean of experience, which causes to respond through a powerful expenditure of energy every part of this boundless structure? Who shall tell?

These authors are blindly groping after the higher levels of mental evolution. Because of the oppressive traditions of the West they are not able to see the existence of the super-conscious levels of mind. Now the McDougallian scheme of evolution of sentiments when supplemented by that of Dr. Garnett reaches the highest conceivable point in the conscious stratum. Thereafter the thread has to be picked up by Hindu philosophy and psychology. The evolution of mental structure should now proceed on a higher and different plane. It should be controlled in such a way that regression to the lower levels may be effectively prevented from occurring. Sentiments of such a type should be formed as will lead to the assimilation of the instincts and emotions. All these are possible through the conscious and purposeful direction of mental evolution in the super-conscious levels. And the steps for such direction are laid down in our yogic discipline.

If there are levels below consciousness, then it goes without saying that there are levels above consciousness too. And if psychology has succeeded in unearthing the facts and principles governing the structure and function of the mind at the lower levels, then it is competent to deal with the super-conscious levels too. And such a psychology was known to our ancients.

Starting from the point where McDougallian psychology abandons the evolution of the human mind, we can show that by making Parabrahma — regarding sentiment as the Master sentiment, the mind can rise to the higher levels till it reaches the highest possible point in evolution. The methods of concentration and meditation and the goal of renunciation and detachment laid down in our holy scriptures show clearly the stages through which the aspirant should consciously guide his mind. The yoga system describes the several successive stages through which the mind has to pass before it reaches the final goal. The experiences, psychical and mental, which the seeker after the highest truth has are also described. But when the super-conscious stage is reached, it should not be taken for granted that there will be no fall. The power of the lower levels, particularly of the unconscious is very great. So, he who is moving in the super-conscious levels must keep on till the highest stage of God-realisation is attained. Then there is no fall.

The Conception of Fanā (Passing-away) In Islamic Mysticism

BY

DR. MIR VALIUDDIN

Osmania University, Hyderabad Dn.

In order to understand the Conception of "Passing-Away" or "Fanā" in Islamic Mysticism, it is essential to grasp clearly the relation postulated by the Mystics between what they call 'Haqq' and 'Khalq', or between the Creator and the Created, between God and man.

"Haqq" (the Divine Essence) is the Absolute which exists by itself and is conceived by itself. It is further believed to be the *Absolute Knower*. In knowing itself it knows all things in itself and distinguishes them from itself as objects of its knowledge. The Absolute knows its *own thoughts*,—these being the objects of its knowledge. Now if God's knowledge is perfect (which, ex-hypothesi, it is), His ideas (objects of Knowledge) are also perfect in every way. Further, God has knowledge, or is a knower, from eternity. Therefore his ideas are also eternal. They are uncreated. Knowledge is an attribute of God and cannot therefore be separated from Him. It constitutes the very essence of God. As God is uncreated, His Knowledge is also uncreated. The difference does not impair the essential unity of knowledge, knower, and known, but is none the less inherent in the nature of Things, i.e. in Reality as manifested to us. "Triplicity" as Ibnul 'Arabi' says, "is the foundation of becoming".

Now the Ideas of God are technically called "Essences". The Essences, as explained above, are firstly uncreated, and secondly, perfect and unchangeable. They are the essences of things. Every essence has its own characteristics or essential nature. In the Quran they are called "Shākilāth". As the Essences are uncreated and unchangeable their characteristics or peculiarities are also uncreated and immutable.

Now Creation is an act of will. The will of God obeys the Knowledge of God. Creation is nothing but the external manifestation or actualisation of the ideas of God or the "Essences". That which is manifested or actualised existed eternally in the mind of God as an 'idea'. Ideas actualised are called "Things" or "Khalq".

Thus what are called the 'Khalq' or the many things of the world are *externally* the creatures of God, and God is the Creator of Things. Says the Quran

"God is the Creator of every thing".

Internally, things are the ideas (objects known) of God. God knows the things—is their "Knower". And God knows them before He Created them. They existed as "ideas" in His mind before they were created. Even as "Ideas" things are not *identical* with the essence of God. What constitutes the difference between God, the "Knower", and the Ideas of God or 'essences' which may be termed "the Known", may thus be briefly summed up.

The Known is a "form" possessing limitation or determination or individualisation. It subsists in the mind of the Knower, does not possess its own independent existence. It possesses no positive attributes, e.g. life, knowledge, will etc., though it possesses the capacity of acquiring those attributes. It is passive, and having no existence and existential attributes of its own it possesses no activity of its own.

On the other hand, God the Knower, is free from every limitation or determination, and has no 'form'. He exists in Himself depending on nothing else but Himself. He possesses positive attributes and is active. From the above statement it is clear that the relation between the Knower and the Known is one of "Otherness", never of 'Identity'.

Now the Secret of Creation, according to the Sufi's, is that God manifests or reveals Himself in His own ideas. In thus manifesting Himself God remains unchanged. He ever was, is, and shall be. He manifests Himself according to the "aptitudes" of the things in which He manifests Himself. The essences of things are in themselves non-existent, that is to say, they subsist only in the Knowledge of God as Ideas. They derive what existence they possess from God who is the real substance of all that exists. There is really nothing in existence except God. He is the First, the Last, the Outward, the Inward. He is the substance of what is manifested, and is the substance of what remains latent at the time of manifestation.

When things derive their existence from God who is the real substance of all that exists, it follows necessarily that all attributes, i.e. life, knowledge, will, power, hearing, sight, speech, belong to God alone. As Abdul Karim Jili has put it: When the Sufi knows the true meaning of "God was and there was naught beside Him", in that moment it is revealed to him that his hearing is God's

hearing, his sight God's sight, his speech God's speech, his life God's life, his knowledge God's knowledge, his will God's will and his power God's power, and that God possesses all these attributes fundamentally; and then he knows that all the aforesaid qualities are borrowed and metaphorically applied to himself; whereas they really belong to God." (Jili's *Insan-i-Kamil*, quoted by Dr. Nicholson in his *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, p. 93). This is the doctrine of "Tawhid-i-Sifati," a necessary consequence of the doctrine of "Tawhid-i-Dhati."

Since attributes really belong to God, it necessarily follows that God alone is the doer, the agent. The Sufis negate action from the essences of things, as they negate existence and attributes from them. (This is what is called Tawhid-i-Fali). Thus God alone exists, has attributes, is the real agent. It follows that to God alone belong "all things in heaven and on earth". He is the only Lord and Master "Tawhid-fil-Asar".

Now having grasped clearly the relation that exists between 'Haqq' and 'Khalq', between 'God' and 'man', we are in a position to understand the true significance of the mystical state known as "Fanā" or "Passing-away".

"Fanā" does not mean, that the "Dhat", i.e., the 'essence' of the Sufi is annihilated and he totally disappears in God (or is absorbed in God), as a piece of ice disappears in water. This, according to Islamic Mysticism, is not possible; for it will mean the "transformation of essence". We have seen above that essentially we are "Ideas" in the mind of God which He actualises or externalises by manifesting or revealing Himself in them. And the relation between the knower and the known is definitely that of "otherness", never Identity. A painter conceives of, say, the idea of a dog and then paints it on the canvas. The idea exists in his mind, depends for its (mental) existence totally on his mind. The painter's mind is the "substratum" of the idea. But the knower and the known, the mind and the idea are in no sense identical. The painter is not the dog and the dog is not the painter. The relation between the two is clearly one of "otherness". In what is known as Fanā, the essence of the Sufi is not transformed into that of God. The Sufi does not become God. What happens is merely this: The Sufi becomes as he was when he subsisted in God's knowledge before God brought him into being. Before Creation he was an idea in the mind of God, and in the state of Fanā he becomes as he was when he subsisted in God's mind—an idea. Before Creation, being an idea, he had a limited form, did not possess his own independent existence, and had no positive

attributes. Further, he possessed no activity of his own. When he was created, existence, attributes and action were bestowed upon him according to the nature or capacity of his "Dhat" or essence. This bestowal was nothing but the manifestation of God Himself in accordance with the aptitude of His Idea, i.e. the essence of the Sufi. In the state of Fanā the Sufi reverts to his original form and sinks into nothingness. As Jalaluddin Rumi puts it.

"When the disc of the sun makes its appearance in the East no trace of the night or the stars is left. Similar is the case with the seeker of the Presence of God. When God appears the seeker passes into nothingness. In the Divine Presence he perishes and then exists and does not exist. This existence in non-existence is a strange phenomenon." Rumi says that it is not easy to understand this phenomenon, and many an intellect is lost in attempting to comprehend it.

But this phenomenon, though strange it is, is to a certain extent made intelligible, when we bear in mind that in "Fanā," as stated above, the essence of the seeker's being survives. For essentially, as we know, he is an idea in the mind of God, and Ideas are different from the mind that knows them. That is to say, the seeker (the idea) does not become God (the knower), and God (the knower) does not become the seeker (idea). No transformation of essence takes place. Reversion to original form is all that happens. God alone remains. The same idea is expressed by Rumi in another way. He says:

"The nearness to God is not attained by rising higher in space. Nearness to God is attained by shaking off one's own existence. The treasures of Truth are found in "non-existence"! O thou proud of thy existence, thou knowest not what non-existence means!"

'Non-existence' means nothing more than reverting back to one's own original condition and becoming idea in the mind of God. Existence belongs to God alone. It never belonged to us fundamentally. It is bestowed upon us as a gift. In the state of Fanā the gift is returned to the giver, and we attain to our original state.

This is the true significance of Fanā in Islamic Mysticism, which maintains that ontologically there is but one Reality; and thus there is Unity in existence, but in Essences or Ideas there is multiplicity. For the Ideas or Essences are the other of God, being limited in form; and things which are just the manifestation of ideas must be for the same reason the "other" of God. So in the Kuran they are called "the other of God".

Towards a Philosophical Theory of Progress

BY

RAM MURTI LOOMBA

Lecturer in Philosophy, Lucknow University

What is it that constitutes progress? Why do we call a particular march of events progress? This is a question that must be distinguished from another question, namely, *Why* is there progress in the universe? The former is a question about the nature of progress. The latter, on the other hand, is a question that refers to the motive behind progress. In doing so, it already presupposes an answer to the question about the nature of progress and also an assumption that progress is a fact and not an illusion. The question as to what progress is is therefore a fundamental one and must be clearly answered before we can judge whether progress is possible, whether progress is a fact or an illusion, and why there is progress at all.

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There is a widely prevalent view according to which progress consists in approach towards an ideal. Those who hold this view fail to perceive the fundamental difference pointed out above between the motive behind progress and the nature of progress. Certainly the motive behind a march of events may be the achievement of an ideal. The progress of the universe as a whole being one of the major problems before civilized man, this would raise further questions as to whose mind it is to which the motive behind the progress of the universe must be attributed, and as to whether that motive can be known by us. Each of these would require a separate and distinct answer. But the question as to the nature of progress, as to what progress is, whereby an ideal may, or, for all that we know, may not be realised, is a different problem altogether.

One thing is evident. Progress involves a *transition*, a change, a becoming. In a static condition no progress is possible. *Dynamism* is essential to progress. A static condition, if there is to be progress, must be given a shaking. Instability must be introduced into it, which must bring in its wake, however temporarily, a certain amount of *disintegration*.

Mere change, however, is evidently not enough to constitute progress. Progress is not mere becoming, but becoming more,

better or higher. It consists of not merely movement, but movement forward.

What is the standard, it may naturally be asked, by which the character of movement forward or higher is to be judged? What is the standard of comparison by which we are to judge whether we are becoming worse or better, more or less, whether we are rising higher or sinking lower? This standard is the *present actual* state, not a future ideal. Progress consists in becoming better than we are at present, or more than we are at present, or higher than we are at present. It is movement forward from the present, ahead of the present. There may or may not be an ideal being approached, consciously or unconsciously. It is not, at any rate, the essence of progress. The central point of reference for progress lies in the present.

Progress, thus conceived, can be likened to a gradual ascent on a gentle slope. It is not necessarily implied that the top, the end, must be perceptible before it is reached and must inspire the ascent. It is an ascent, where perhaps we can glance a little at the path we have just traversed and can just have a glimpse of a little of the path that lies ahead. Even here, its character as progress does not lie in the comparison of the present with the immediate past, or in any inspiration derived from the immediate future. It lies, on the contrary, in the experience of ascent, in the feeling of rising higher, grasped *immediately* by an *intellectual sympathy* with one's own personality. It may, therefore, still more appropriately be likened to the ascent on a gentle slope of a man who has become visually indifferent to the inclines around him and is deeply absorbed in an inward experience of gradually rising higher and higher. The standard of progress lies not in looking outward from the present to a foreseen goal in the future, but in the awakening of an 'inner eye' to an intuition of rising higher, to the creation of new, unforeseen and unforeseeable possibilities.

Progress, then, is not change, but a process of maturation which carries with it an experience of constant recreating of oneself, a unique experience with a quality of its own. It carries within itself its own enjoyment which serves as its own inspiration. It is thus specially characterised by *spontaneity*.

The nature of progress is, in this manner, seen to be very much akin to the joyful, spontaneous and creative nature of play. No wonder indeed that the greatest strides in man's progress were achieved in the joyful, spontaneous and creative spirit of play, whether in literature, or in painting, or in music, or in the realm

of science. We are here speaking, of course, of play proper, which we might as well term 'serious play' to distinguish it from the pseudo-play more appropriately called mere fooling, valuable as affording mental rest or physical exercise but of no importance so far as our present problem is concerned.

Progress, then, has its standard as well as its inspiration within itself, not in a distant goal or ideal. It consists in an ascent from, or a rising higher from, or a becoming better or more than, the present. The present, however, from which progress proceeds to a better or a higher, is not left behind in the process. For, the better or the higher is just the product of a continual spontaneous elaboration or self-development of the present. Progress is not mere transition, not a mere continual succession. It is a *swelling force*. In it the past is all carried over and therefore preserved in the present, and the present is ever gnawing forth into the future. It is a continual swelling of the present. Thus conceived, it may be compared to a snowball rolling upon itself in the snow, accumulating to itself more and more of it and thus always swelling beyond its own dimensions. The present, as it advances, continually swells into a new present, higher, better or more, and is thus preserved within it; and there is no limit to this preservation.

At the same time, however, progress implies that there must be an opposition between the present and that into which it passes. The present, of course, is preserved. Nevertheless, evolution, if anything, must be a change from something to what it is not and what is in some way its opposite, a continual creation of new unforeseeable forms. It will be a progressive evolution if that opposite is a better or a higher state. One of the finest instances in European history of this aspect of progress is to be found in the passage from the ancient and middle ages when man stood before the independent reality of Nature as a powerless being who could only possibly obey, to the times since the Renaissance, when Nature has increasingly become something like a tool or a weapon in the hands of Man who has become ever more conscious of a kind of intrinsic divinity. Here was a passage from being faced with the power of nature in opposition to rising above, subjugating and utilising nature for human ends. It was a progress from a face to face struggle with nature to its very opposite, to the raising of our conduct above the mere naturalistic struggle for existence into the service of higher and nobler ends.

This analysis of the nature of progress, let us observe in passing, indicates also that faith in progress is not incompatible with

any opposition there might be between the process of nature and the moral life. Those, therefore, who hold that there is such an incompatibility maintain an untenable position. Nor is their position strengthened if they argue that the process of nature is opposed to the moral life because the former leads to success in the struggle for existence while the latter does not necessarily do so. Success in the struggle for existence is indeed a much lower and much less happy and perfect state than the moral life. It would certainly be nothing less than a progressive evolution to pass from it to its opposite, the state of goodness. Evolution, if anything, we have seen, must be change from something into what it is not, into its opposite, and it must be a progressive evolution if that opposite is a better state and at the same time comprehends the fruits of the earlier states.

It is sometimes argued that since the value of the increase in our knowledge may be questioned with reference to the happiness of human beings, the progressive character of human and even animal history is very doubtful. It seems to me, however, that the objection is inadmissible. In raising it the objector *ipso facto* admits that the vistas of happiness have widened from the merely animal hunt-eat-drink-and-be-festive-type to merely the conveniences, comforts and amenities afforded us by the accumulation of scientific knowledge, and further on to the pleasures, first, of knowledge itself and, secondly, of that great source of satisfaction and happiness, valuation. Conscious deliberative valuation is essentially a development out of the growth of civilization. In itself it gives a sense of mastery and satisfaction which is unique and incomparable with anything in savage life. It constitutes thus an unquestionable testimony to the fact of progress.

Let us return to our analysis of the nature of progress. The view that progress consists in approach towards an ideal is also untenable on grounds other than those given above. The present always is unique and does not admit of being determined or judged by a future unknown and unrealized ideal. Each stage of evolution, therefore, is a standard of judgment in its own immediacy. An ideal future, further, can never, so far as finite human consciousness is concerned, become an achieved present of immediate realization. It might be claimed that it may be possible to achieve such immediate insight into an ideal future in some kind of a mystical experience and thus to have a standard for the determination of progress. Then, however, it will be no longer a future ideal but a present ideal, actual and empirical.

It is, nevertheless, often pointed out that the ideal passes judgment upon the historical fact. Those who stress this are often guilty of a confusion, in their discussion about progress, between two meanings of 'ideal'. By 'ideal' we might mean the goal of an individual's actions as intended by him. Or one might mean by it the cosmic ideal, the goal, if there be any, which a force behind the changes in the universe, including mankind, is pursuing. The former is pointed out in evidence, and it is believed that the latter is thereby proved. It is not realized that the latter must be the absolute ideal of evolution, whereas the former is only an individual human ideal or end, which is, properly speaking, only an event in the evolution of the universe and has therefore nothing to do with the direction of the whole.

What is outlined above must not be taken, it should be noted, for an immanent as opposed to a transcendental view of progress. Immanence seems necessarily to imply complete realization at every step, which obviously cannot be claimed for progress. For, progress, to retain its character, must consist in a continuing to progress, a rising above the present to a progressive or rising movement. This by its nature being an infinite process, a complete realization is impossible at any step whatsoever. Moreover, even partial realization is only possible rather than actual at every step. If it were the latter, all movement or change would be progress. Progress, however, we have already seen, is not mere change or movement.

Indeed the opposition between immanence and transcendence is not exclusive and absolute, at least as far as the problem of progress is concerned. The end or standard of progress is neither unapproachable nor ever within us even as dormant. Both of them are essentially subjectivistic conceptions, the transcendental because of what it leaves to us, and the immanent because of what it supposes to be always within our grasp. The ideal is not already given within us; yet it is immediately approachable.

The Aesthetic Philosophy of Rabindranath and Bergson

BY

V. S. NARVANE

"The aesthetic activities in general may be expected to play an increasing part in human life as evolution advances.....A growing surplus of energy will bring a growing proportion of aesthetic activities and gratifications."—*Herbert Spencer*.

Principles of Psychology, p. 540.

Rabindranath Tagore has left for India a new testament of beauty. As the appraisal of his work grows, it is realised with increasing assurance that he was above all things an artist. When he writes of art, the reader can feel how the author's enthusiasm wells up till it envelopes his entire being. Critics arrogate to themselves the ability to "systematise" the poet's work, to pin him down to some definite metaphysical or ethical position. But the poet eludes them.

Only in the sphere of art can we detect in the poet's work some indications of system-building. Nor is this surprising. For it is his aesthetic doctrine that has earned for Rabindranath's thought the universal significance it has now attained. It is as prophet of beauty that Rabindranath has succeeded in breaking those barriers of intellectual isolationism that has kept nations apart for ages. Johan Bojer has said of him "He is India bringing to Europe a new symbol—not the Cross but the Lotus."

What Rabindranath has done for India, Bergson has in a large measure done for Europe. He has given a new evaluation of science, and a new direction to all serious thought, so that we can speak of "the Age of Bergson" in philosophy as surely as one can speak of "the Age of Freud" in psychology. In Bergson's description of Reality as 'creative', we have an idea which is of profound importance to the understanding of modern thought. It carries a message as revolutionary in its implications as it is universal in its appeal.

It would be interesting to see what these two great thinkers of our time had to say about the eternally baffling problem of beauty and its creation. It will, of course, be a very mechanical

the story which the child accepts as something profoundly real, something he cannot possibly doubt. The true artist is never bound by rigid, conventional rules. "Truth looks tawdry when it is over dressed" Leibnitz says "...We see painters and other artists well enough aware of what is perfect and what is faulty, but often unable to give any reason for their taste." They can only say that the art product they do not like lacks a certain 'je ne sais quoi'. What is wrong with it is that it does not satisfy the artist's intuition.

The object of art, says Bergson, is to reveal to us, in nature and in the soul—without us and within us—things which we cannot reach through the consciousness. To a great artist a vision is native which others miss because they cannot probe into the depths of reality as he can. Schelling says "The artist emulates that Spirit of Nature which speaks from within things and uses their shape and form as its mere sensuous symbols". The artist can speak "from within things", because while the ordinary intellect sees only isolated views of reality, and like a cinema projector gives them the illusion of integrity, the artist by means of his intuition grasps that continuity which weaves things into living reality.

Rabindranath says: "Abstract truth may belong to science or metaphysics, but the world of reality belongs to Art." Again, "Art has the magic wand which gives undying reality to all it touches". Thus the artist, according to Rabindranath, not only reveals reality but he also creates reality. He creates truth in the sense that the artist "reminds the world that with the truth of our expression we grow in truth."

In "Religion of Man" Rabindranath says: "Art evokes in our minds the deep, rich sense of reality." And then in strikingly Bergsonian words he continues "The magic of...music...is at the heart of all creation, weaving the incessant change. It is the rhythm that churns up images from the vague and makes tangible what is illusive". In "Creative Unity" he writes, "Beauty is no phantasy, it has the everlasting meaning of reality."

Beauty is no phantasy—that is the key to the whole idea. The artist is not the ineffectual angel blindly beating his wings. He does not pursue the unreal. On the other hand, what he looks for is MORE real than other things which strike us as real in our every day life. He pursues beauty, and "beauty is truth". To say that the artist is lost in search of illusions is exactly the same as to say that "beauty is UNtruth."

To identify beauty with truth is not, however, to give it an objective reality of its own, independent of the artist's perception of it. Sir S. Radhakrishnan says: "For Rabindranath Tagore beauty is intensely subjective"; and the famous conversation between Rabindranath and Einstein printed as an appendix to the Hibbert Lectures, shows that even the great scientist agrees with him on this point. "The harpstring is neither feeble nor strong. It all depends upon the players touch". Beauty is illusive; it "lives in seeming" as Hegel says. Beauty is fleeting. And the artist's imagination, in Wordsworth's well known words "recoils from every thing but the plastic, the pliant, the indefinite".

Only in the light of this subjectivity of beauty can we understand Rabindranath's dictum: "Art is MAYA". And Bergson's views are of the same intent. He says: "The real question is... whether, except as revealed by the artist, nature is beautiful at all—whether, indeed, Nature is not secondary to Art?"

These two sets of ideas in the aesthetic writings of both Rabindranath and Bergson apparently involve a contradiction. On the one hand we are told that the artist isolates reality and lays it bare before us as the ordinary man cannot do; and since the reality which the artist isolates is none other than Beauty in all its manifestations, the latter possesses, in a manner, absolute reality. On the other hand the very existence of Beauty is called into question, and with almost Berkeleyan emphasis the reality of beauty is declared to be dependent on its "being perceived by the artist. The "esse" of beauty is pronounced to consist in its "percipi".

The contradiction however is only on the surface. It does not really vitiate the aesthetic theory of either Bergson or Rabindranath. When they speak of beauty being perceived they really mean "appreciated," and there is a world of difference between the two. Again when they speak loosely of mind they really refer to the "imagination". Moreover, the reality in question is itself in the present case a non-material entity. And the process of the artist's perception of reality is carefully distinguished by both from the ordinary man's cognition of the world around him. Bergson says "Art merely suggests emotion." Beauty is not recorded by the artist's mind as the brain records visual or auditory sensations. Beauty is suggested by the artist's imagination. It does not appeal "primarily to our intellect and only secondarily to our desires" (emotion), as Saint Thomas Aquinas asserted. According to Thomas Aquinas, the perception of beauty is like any other perception, and he says that "those senses are most concerned in beauty which are most concerned in apprehension, namely the sight and the hearing." Rabindranath and Bergson have an

altogether different conception of the artist's understanding and expression of beauty. The former boldly challenges the axiom that "clarity of perception is necessarily the only important aspect of truth." "A bull's—eye lantern view", he says, "is a clear view but it is not therefore a complete view." Beauty is SUGGESTED to the artist, and his art SUGGESTS it to us. "It is not as ether waves that we receive light. The morning does not wait to be introduced to us by some scientist." "We know the universe as truth, we FEEL it as beauty."

Of the poets Bergson says "...They contrive to make us see something of what they have seen. By rhythmical arrangement of words, which thus become organised and animated with a life of their own, they tell us or rather suggest, things that speech was not calculated to express." And, as though he had deliberately set out to resolve the contradiction referred to above, Bergson explains more fully: "Art is certainly a more direct vision of reality. But this purity of perception implies...an innate and specially localised disinterestedness;...in short, a certain immateriality of life, which is idealism. ...Realism is in the work, when idealism is in the soul, and it is only through ideality that we can resume contact with reality."

There we have the crux of the matter. Reality is not denied to beauty, even objectively. Only its perception by the artist is not an intellectual apprehension but what Bergson might call an ideal perception—the audition of the composer, the vision of the painter, the emotion, the feeling of every artist. And it is on this perception that the essence of beauty, in so far as it is real to us, is declared to depend.

This ideality implies a distinct break with the mechanistic prejudices of the brain and the utilitarian conventions in which the average man's imagination is so often bogged up. Rabindranath and Bergson are both emphatically anti-utilitarian and anti-mechanistic in their aesthetic doctrines.

The words 'art' and 'utility' so naturally fall into opposite categories that it is often forgotten that the utilitarian theory in the realm of art has been supported by many great philosophers. In Plato's "Hippias Major", Socrates asks: we do not call eyes beautiful if they cannot see, do we?; and goes on to say that what makes wisdom beautiful is the efficiency it gives us in our every day life. And in the opinion of David Hume utility is not merely the attendant of beauty but its very essence. "That shape which produces strength is beautiful in one animal, and that which is a sign of agility in another....And architects declare only that pillar beautiful in which the top is more slender than the base".

Bergson and Rabindranath are both uncompromising critics of this view. But their arguments are different. Rabindranath in the course of his criticism of the "art for utility" theory emphasises the element of joy in art as distinct from the element of use. Bergson, using a more strictly philosophical argument says that what gives us utility CANNOT give us truth or reality and therefore the artist must expugn every element of utility from his work. Thus while Rabindranath contrasts utility with JOY, Bergson contrasts it with TRUTH (or reality).

Rabindranath says that the very criterion of art is that it should please without being useful. Utility may be the outcome of art but never its aim, which is delight. "The narrow emphasis on utility diverts us from the complete man to the merely useful man." In today's chaotic civilisation where "life has been made secondary to life's materials" art alone can liberate us from the tyranny of utility. "Why did the stream dry up"?

I put a dam across it to have it for my own use, that is why the stream dried up.

"Why did the harpstring break?"

I tried to force a note that was beyond its power, that is why the harpstring is broken.

Plato tried to reach a compromise between utility and joy by identifying beauty with "profitable pleasure", but Rabindranath would have none of this. In a sense he accepts Oscar Wilde's shocking declaration that "all art is utterly useless." He thinks of the artist as the creator of joyous things. For him the artist is alive to the "joy that sets the twin brothers, Life and Death, dancing over the wide world, the joy that sweeps in with the tempest, shaking and waking all life with laughter." Rabindranath refers enthusiastically to the mantra of the Taittiriya Upanishad "through joy things are born, through joy they are sustained, to joy they return." The true artist is he who sees this principle of joy in the universe and conveys it to those who without his aid might miss that principle. By creating things of beauty the artist shows that even life's tragedies occur not to demonstrate their own reality, but to reveal that eternal principle of joy in life to which they give such a rude shaking. This conception of art as the vehicle of universal joy is central to Rabindranath's thought, and may well be regarded as the positive counter-part to Aristotle's theory of art as the instrument for the purgation of painful and unpleasant emotions.

Bergson as mentioned above, criticises the utilitarian theory from an entirely different angle. He says that the artist, as the true idealist, is detached from the material aspect of life. It may be objected that a person who is away from life is less likely to

give us reality than those who are in the thick of life. According to Bergson, exactly the reverse is the case. "Needs of action constrain us to narrow our field of vision. Practical life puts blinkers on our eyes and contracts our horizon". Our brain helps this process of impoverishment. It leads us not to reality but to the advantages which this or that aspect of reality might have for us. But from time to time men are born who are not bound to the treadmill of practical life. The artist gives us a more direct vision of reality because he is truly disinterested. Kant said that the satisfaction which occasions the judgment of taste is disinterested, even more, in some respects, than that of the moral judgment. On this point, Bergson is in agreement with his great predecessor; and this is also what Schopenhauer means when he says that aesthetics is the only impartial kind of knowledge, all other knowledge being in the service of the Will.

Even more important than this rejection of utilitarian convention is the complete break with the mechanistic tendency of the intellect which Bergson prescribes for every artist. Reality is living, dynamic. The artist, who grasps reality, cannot look at things after cutting them up into parts. In his essay on the theory of the comic entitled "Laughter", Bergson points out how we feel a certain incongruity immediately we see any mechanistic process encrusted on living reality. "A land-scape may be beautiful and sublime, or it may be insignificant and ugly. But it is never laughable". We are not amused by a landscape, because it is natural. We are amused by anything which is artificial or mechanical. Now, if ordinary man instinctively sees the ridiculousness of mechanical behaviour, how much more would the artist be struck by it!

The artist does not see any utility, purpose or plan in his art. The aesthetic process is anti-thetical to the mechanistic process. These two truths Bergson elaborates by exposing the errors of Radical Mechanism as well as Radical Finalism in art.

Let us take any great painting. Now, if we suppose our intellect to be so made that we can grasp the picture only by looking at it through innumerable coloured squares of mosaic we would be under the mechanistic hypothesis. On the other hand, if we say that, beside the materiality of the collection, there must be a plan by which the artist has arranged these squares in his mind, we would be under the finalistic hypothesis.

But in neither case would we get at the real process, because there are no squares brought together. The whole picture is the projection of an indivisible intuition. By the mere fact of entering into our perception the picture is decomposed before our eyes

into an infinite number of small squares which present, as re-composed, a wonderful arrangement.

Now it may be asked: if there is no purpose or plan for which the artist works, nor any arrangement by which we perceive his work, are we not back to the "art for art's sake" theory? The simple answer is: Yes, we are. And why fight shy of the phrase? Rabindranath and Bergson are both great supporters of "art for art's sake", though they may not expressly declare it. Rabindranath says that all art arises out of man's longing to express himself for the sake of expression. The joy of expression is manifested in artistic creation. "Feeling expressed for expression's sake"—these are the strikingly similar words of Bosanquet who in his lectures on aesthetics defines as above the fundamental principle of art. In Bosanquet's words, if there could be an expression of *unexpressiveness*, then even in that one could have the highest achievements of the sublime and the humorous; and the very distinction of modern art is that it emphasises the idea of expressiveness in art as the ancients emphasised the idea of harmony. Rabindranath says that the doctrine of "Art for art's sake" has fallen into disrepute on account of the ascetic and puritanic influence which rejects enjoyment as an end in itself. But enjoyment is the soul of art which comes to man proposing, in the words of Walter Pater, to give him nothing but the highest quality to his moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake. While Rabindranath points to the artist's "expression for the sake of expression", Bergson emphasises the artist's "Observation for the sake of observation". The artist, says Bergson, is the man who "applies himself to colours and forms, and since he loves colour for colour and form for form, since he perceives them for their sake and not for his own, it is the inner life of things which he sees appearing through their forms and colours". Of the artists it may be said that nature, in a fit of absent-mindedness, has forgotten to attach action to their perception. They do not observe in order to act, but just for the joy of observation, and therefore it is true in a sense that they are "born free". Kant says, "The beautiful agrees with the sublime in this, that both please us in themselves".

Thus Rabindranath and Bergson both accept that view of art which has been labelled "art for art's sake". This does not mean that they dispense even with expression, as some modern thinkers led by Giovanni Gentile do. According to this later view, which claims to be the logical culmination of the art for art's sake tendency, art consists in mere appreciation of beauty, and the expression of beauty is not one of its necessary components. Gentile says,

"The pure subjective form of every thought, in which art consists, can only be *feeling*.....ART is not, as some have said (Croce is obviously meant) the expression of the feeling but the feeling itself.

This extreme view is born out of a reaction against an equally extreme type of intellectualism which over-emphasised the thought element in art. For this over-emphasis, Hegel is partly responsible. "Every thing that is beautiful", says Hegel, "is really beautiful as partaking in the mind and being produced thereby". Again, "the absolute need from which art springs is in the fact that man is a *thinking* consciousness". Such a view naturally called forth the objection that art is a matter which concerns the imagination more than the understanding. So long as this distinction meant only that man is an artist as soon as he imagines, and long before he reasons, it served a very valuable idea. It is the great service of Benedetto Croce that he stressed the priority of imagination to thought and of the artistic, image-forming, activity to the logical, concept-forming activity. But this idea was, as seen above, carried to the other extreme and culminated in Gentile's identification of art with "pure feeling" (as against "pure thought"). Rabindranath and Bergson steer between the two extremes of narrow intellectualism and a cult of feeling.

From the above general formulation of the aesthetic views of Rabindranath and Bergson two conclusions emerge: First, that art is **PERSONAL**—(it depends upon the artist's pleasure in the art-process itself). Secondly, that art is unforeseeable—"The result of the art-process is not foreseen even by the artist himself".

While both accept these conclusions, Rabindranath emphasises the first, namely the personal, and Bergson the second, namely the unforeseeable aspect of art.

The view that art is personal communication is part of that philosophy of personality which is Rabindranath's distinctive contribution to modern thought". Where our personality feels its wealth it breaks out in display. What overflows our need becomes articulate". Our personality is a living unity. Its standard of reality is hurt at the slightest consciousness of discord, and its unity is satisfied in a picture, a poem, a song. In art, man's personality is free just because art "dwells in the surplus", just because art is not a calculated effort but, in Browning's words, an outburst, an effluence. No work of art can be understood or appreciated unless we feel the artist's presence. In Rabindranath's famous parable, supposing a visitor from Mars comes to the earth and hears a gramophone record, all he can see is the revolving disc. Only if he meets the composer can he understand that music as a vehicle of the artist's feelings.

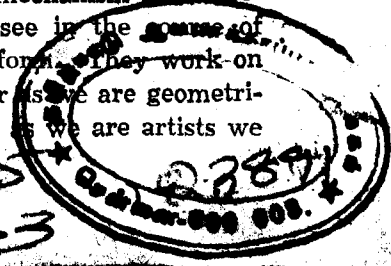
For Bergson too art is personal communication. There is rhythm in art which requires a point at which it can converge and from which it can flow again like the waves of the ocean. This rhythm, this "entelechy" in art, is nothing but that internal co-ordination of all parts by the function of the whole which the artist's personality constantly aims at. Bergson says "the poet not only expresses his inner self, he also develops our hidden self". The poet expresses a state of the soul, and if we understand his work it is only because there is some idea in us, however nascent, which corresponds to what he describes. The artist, moreover, not only reveals his personality, he also enriches it.

And here we come to the unforeseeable aspect of art. Rabindranath says that the principle of unity in a work of art is unanalysable because the artist never makes any conscious effort to achieve that unity. In the prologue to his play "Phalguni", the king asks the poet about the meaning of his lines, and the poet answers, "The flute is played to be listened to, not to be understood". The artist goes on creating, just as the fancy takes him. In Rabindranath's own drawings we see this unforeseeable element in art. Starting with erasures in his manuscripts he often went on extending his lines and curves till figures emerged which he had never set out to draw.

Bergson, of course, has much more elaborately described the unforeseeability of art. If the artist himself is not the same person during the different stages of artistic creation, how can he predict what the final shape of the art-product would be? "The finished portrait is explained by the features of the model, by the nature of the artist, by the colours spread out on the palette", but even with the knowledge of these, the artist could not have foreseen what the picture would be, "for to predict it would have been to produce it before it was produced—an absurd hypothesis which is its own refutation". What we do depends upon what we are, but what we are also largely depends upon what we do. We are creating ourselves continually, and this "creation of self by self" is nowhere more clearly manifest than in the aesthetic process. Each of our states, at the moment of its issue, modifies our personality, and similarly the artist's talent is formed or deformed, in any case modified, under the influence of the work he produces.

This doctrine is of great significance, to Bergson's entire philosophy. He makes use of it in his critique of mechanism and teleology. Both mechanism and finalism fail to see in the course of things generally an unforeseeable creation of form. They work on the principle of like producing like. "In so far as we are geometricians we reject the unforeseeable". In so far as we are artists we

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accept it, because "art lives on creation and implies a latent belief in the spontaneity of nature".

Thus the aesthetic doctrines of Rabindranath and Bergson run on closely parallel lines. In their view of intuition, in their protest against the utilitarian conventions in art, in their characterisation of the aesthetic process as personal and unpredictable, their ideas are strikingly similar. And yet, strangely enough, they draw quite contradictory conclusions regarding the ultimate scope of art. According to Bergson, art aims at the individual. According to Rabindranath, art aims at the universal.

Bergson declares that what the artist fixes on his canvas is something he has seen at a certain spot, on a certain day, with a colouring that will never be seen again. What the dramatist unfolds before us is the life history of an individual soul, a living tissue of feelings and events, something which has happened once and can never be repeated. These feelings have been individualised.

Bergson even makes the startling statement that a study of other men is not necessary to the tragic poet. The comedian, in giving us general types, does portray the universal. But the comedian is not, after all, the artist par excellence. To Bergson, as to Bacon, "strangeness" is the soul of art.

All true art is the outcome of individual intuitions. It appeals to individuals, and it aims at the individual.

Now let us look at Rabindranath. Art captures not the fleeting but the eternal, the universally true. The greatness and beauty of Oriental art, especially in Japan and China, consists in its power to reach the universal soul of things. In his Andhra lectures entitled "Man", Rabindranath clearly poses the question: "Is aesthetic experience the manifestation of the universal mind?", and answers: Yes, if it is genuinely aesthetic experience. Looking at History over a large period, we see that artists tend to agree in their judgments of beauty. Rabindranath refers to Bertrand Russell's view that "Beethoven's symphonies are not the creations of the universal mind—they are personal to him", and comments that this statement is true only if Russell seeks to bring out the difference between a symphony and a mathematical truth. But if it means that Beethoven wished to convey only his individual moods, Russell is wrong. Every one, with proper training, can appreciate Beethoven. The symphonies are appreciated by the mind of Man, the Universal. Appreciation is impeded only in some particular men as listeners. For Rabindranath, as for Tolstoy, the very distinction of the artist consists in his ability to convey what is of import to all people. To say that a work of art is good, but that it is of no significance to the majority of people, is the same as saying that a particular kind of food is very good but that most

people cannot eat it. Rabindranath says that art is universal not only because it conveys what all men feel, but also because it can convey *all* that men feel. In the words of Hegel, "art must realise for us the famous saying: *Nihil humani a me alienum puto*".

Thus while Bergson thinks that art aims at the individual, Rabindranath emphasises the universality of all true art. Their views, however, are more or less inevitable, considering the world-view of each. Rabindranath, brought up in close touch with Vedic monotheism which was his family tradition, considered man to be but the reflection of the One Spirit which pervades the whole universe. He described art as personal creation; but he could only think of individual persons in their relation to the Supreme Person. The rhythm of the universe is the creative force in the hand of the artist, but the personality of this or that artist is the "limitation of the Unlimited". The Supreme Spirit is personal where He creates. Art is an outcome of the "surplus" in man, but man himself is the "surplus" in the Supreme Person. What art conveys is therefore the surplus in all men—the surplus in humanity.

Art is born of the artist's joy. But the artist's bliss is itself a fraction of the blissfulness of the Supreme Person. If the latter had found no joy in creating the artist, where would the artist's joy be?

"At the immortal touch of thy hands my little heart loses its limits in joy and gives birth to utterances ineffable."

"I know thou takest pleasure in my singing. I know that only as a singer I come before thy presence."

While Rabindranath inclined towards a monistic conception of an all-pervading spiritual reality, Bergson was the greatest philosopher of flux and change. He looked at life as continual creation. His emphasis on individual intentions was so fundamental to his system that he did not care to inquire whether the artistic process may not embody what has been called the "collective intuition" of humanity. And therefore Bergson conceived of the artist as one who approaches reality by his ability to create himself and by his intuitive understanding of the nature of duration as a growth and an accumulation. The work of art is the concrete record of that particular artist's past "gnawing into the future".

If however we look at a sufficiently large canvas of the work of either Bergson or Rabindranath, it is easy to see that there is no such absolute contradiction between these two different ways of looking at art as the above formulation suggests.

Rabindranath, though a great believer in the eternal, all-pervading Brahman, was also a great champion of individual freedom. The type of monism which he accepted left no room for rigid deter-

minism. In the matter of artistic creation, he was the last to leave out the individual element. True, the artist's vision is in the heart of the universal, nevertheless, RABINDRANATH bids us not to forget that "when the artist looks on a tree he looks on it as unique for him, not as the botanist who generalises and classifies". It is the artist's function to particularise that one tree, though he can do so only through the harmony between his personality and the rest of creation.

Bergson also makes a similar modification from the other end. Even in the introduction to "Creative Evolution", he makes it clear that the individuality he speaks of is never absolute, and that if we try to make it so "all the moulds crack". "It is hard to decide, even in the organised world, what is individual and what is not." While the tendency to individuate is everywhere present, it is everywhere opposed by the tendency towards reproduction. When Bergson says that the artist aims at the individual, he only means that art, as part of life, manifests a search towards individuality. He explicitly tells us: "It is true that aesthetic intuition only attains to the individual. But we can conceive an enquiry turned in the same direction as art, which would take life in general for its object, just as physical scienceprolongs individual facts into general laws." (Creative Evolution pp. 186-187).

This is just what one might expect. For it would be queer indeed if two such dynamic thinkers as Bergson and Rabindranath erected a rigid barrier between the individual and the universal elements in art. Absolute scepticism in art is as impossible as absolute denial of individuality. It is this deep truth that had called forth Kant's emphatic assertion that "a claim to SUBJECTIVE UNIVERSALITY must be implied in the judgment of taste". There certainly can be no rule by which people can be compelled to recognize things as beautiful or ugly: but equally certain it is that the artist's individual judgment has no mere private validity. It is occasioned by the universal communicability of our state of mind in having the particular idea about which the judgment was made. It is this that Nietzsche also tries to express with such conviction when he finds in Tragedy the symbol of the brotherhood of the twin divinities Apollo and Dionysus. These two gods speak with each other's tongues, thus achieving the highest aim of tragedy and of all art. "Apollo stands before me," says Nietzsche, "as the genius of enlightenment and of the principle of individuality; while at the joyous cry of Dionysus the bars of individuality are burst, and the way opened to the womb of being, to the innermost heart of things." Rabindranath and Bergson light their candles at the altar of both these divinities.

Form and Content of Causality

BY

PRABAS JIBAN CHAUDHURY, M.A., M.Sc.

Professor, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, Bengal

Causality, as a strict law of nature, has been vehemently criticised, and well-nigh deposed, by the modern phycists who have based their arguments on Heisenberg's physical principle of Indeterminacy. But there are some amongst them who have attempted to save it. One type of argument they offer is founded on the distinction between form and content of causality. This runs thus:—"Causality is a *form* of thought and it should be formulated very generally without any specific reference to its content. Kant, though he formulated it more generally than Laplace had done, yet made it too narrowly depend on its content. Philosophy should formulate the general form of succession of events, it is the business of science to formulate particular forms of succession. Heisenberg's principle only requires a formulation of a new particular form of succession, and, causality, as a general form and a category of thought, remains intact."¹ A critical examination of this type of argument has been undertaken in this essay, and we have maintained that such arguments succeed in saving only the ghost of causality, not the principle as it is in reality.

Let us first see how some of the most eminent defenders of causality argue. Einstein says:—

"I think that much of the misunderstanding encountered in all this question of causation is due to the rather rudimentary formulation of the causal principle which has been in vogue until now."²

"Our present rough way of applying the principle is quite superficial. We are like a child who judges a poem by the rhyme and knows nothing of the rhythmic pattern."³

¹ See Planck's *Where Science is going* pp. 203-4; Ernst Zimmer's *Revolution in Physics*, pp. 219-20; Also, R. Von Mises; *Probability, Statistics and Truth*, p. 294.

² Planck: *Where Science is Going?* p. 203.

³ Ibid p. 203.

"Quantum physics has presented us with very complex processes and to meet them we must further enlarge and refine our concept of causality."⁴

Max Planck also believes that a new formulation can save the principle. He thinks that the principle is logical and cannot be verified accurately in actuality, but the accord of the principle with actuality can be bettered by a new formulation. He writes thus:—

"I am convinced that the bringing about of that accord must take place, not in the rejection of causality, but in a greater enlargement of the formula and refinement of it, so as to meet modern discoveries."⁵

"Kant took not merely the concept of causality but also to a certain degree of the meaning of the causal law itself as an immediate datum of knowledge and therefore universally valid. Specialized science cannot go thus far."⁶

Science, Planck says, confines itself to proving the significance of the causal law in individual cases. As in Kant, so in all sciences, this category or law of thought is assumed at first, as without it there can be no progress of scientific knowledge. But modifications are necessary in the content or meaning of the law, and these save the law while clarifying it. Planck, therefore, writes, "Some essential modification seems to be inevitable; . . . but I firmly believe, in company with most physicists, that the quantum hypothesis will eventually find its exact expression in certain equations which will be a more exact formulation of the law of causality."⁷

Now, this kind of argument assumes that form and content of knowledge are separate and that philosophy settles the form while science supplies the content from time to time. But this is a naive way of regarding the formal and the significant elements of our knowledge. It is one thing to regard philosophy and its problems as totally different from science and its problems;⁸ the causality of science, in this view, is but a scientific hypothesis

⁴ Ibid p. 204.

⁵ Ibid p. 221.

⁶ Ibid p. 140.

⁷ Ibid p. 143.

⁸ As K. C. Battacharyya believes. See his essay *Concept of Philosophy in Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (Allen and Unwin).

which has nothing to do with the philosophical problem of causality; but it is another thing to view philosophy and science as complementary, one supplying the form, the other the content. The disjunction in the former view is complete and can be understood, but that in the latter is untenable, for the latter, while accepting the relation of philosophy and science as that between form and content, fails to supply any bond of union between the two elements. The two, form and content, cannot be so separated as Einstein and Planck seem to do to simplify the problem of causality. In fact, form must evolve out of the content; a scientific philosopher cannot be, with any consistency, a rationalist or an intuitionist; he has to believe in the logico-empirical method of science as the method of all knowledge. So the form cannot be regarded as external to the content, the categories cannot in principle remain in tact while the content changes. As Philip Frank states, the frame-work of knowledge also is not given for all time. The physicist is convinced that new variables appear with the progress of physics:—

"Similarly, he must be convinced that there does not exist for all eternity a rigid framework which is characterised by the trio of space, time and causality, and in which no experience can change anything."⁹

The general rules of assignment of symbols to experience also change as special rules change. The framework of classical physics was accepted by the school philosophy as eternal truths; now with new discoveries the framework has to alter more or less.

This view of the matter is more sensible, and so, the hope in a new formulation is vain and born of a naivety of thinking.

Kant would point out, in his own way, that form without content is empty as content without form is blind; and the positivists would say that a concept has no meaning unless its constitution is given along with it, that is, the way of its experimental verification mentioned. Kant's formulation of causality,—'succession according to a rule' loses significance unless some rule is mentioned along with it; Kant's 'deduction', in a way, attempts to supply this significance, which is, therefore, a justification of his regarding it as a category of thought.

But Kant, we know, believed in the 'a prioriness' of the categories; his deduction has just a semblance of a deduction. He

⁹ *Between Physics and Philosophy*, p. 101.

did not solve the problem of the relation between the universal and the particular, i.e. he did not tell us exactly how the categories apply to the details of experience. In the Transcendental Analytic he says that the categories are dynamical having only a regulative function, but later (A664—B692) feels that they are also constitutive. Yet this is but a tendency in Kant, and he quite understood that our desire to justify a particular by somehow deducing it from a universal is just a demand of Reason and should never be confused with knowledge, it can never be accomplished. (see H. Kabir's *Kant on philosophy in general*, 1st essay.) A mere bloodless category, i.e. an abstract universal, besides being empty of meaning, is unsupported by any proof of its reality. It must be shown how it orders experience or how it emerges out of the sensuous manifold as a broad principle of unity. A general rule cannot exist in isolation from its special formulation, an universal has to be concrete.¹⁰ The connection of the universal with the particular should be vital, and the unity of the sensuous manifold in a non-sensuous concept real.

Kant's formulation of the category of substance may have been too narrow and closely associated with the content of it, mass, which is found rather crude in modern times; but his way of thinking that led him to give a content to a category and formulate the category with reference to it is sound. And, so far as his formulation of causality is concerned, it is not, as Planck and others think, too narrow. Temporal succession according to a rule, or necessary succession in time, is a correct formulation, and we have not as yet found a tolerable substitute for it. Einstein, who hopes that a new formulation will solve the modern problem, does not suggest any. Planck¹¹ seems to suggest that the succession is logical, and, as such, cannot be verified experimentally with absolute precision. Friend and Fiebleman¹² also held the same view. Cassirer¹³ and Stebbing¹⁴ appear to believe in a causality that is formulated so as to require only some sort of 'simple Laws' in

¹⁰ This view of categories has been very ably advocated by Bland Blanchard in his *Nature of Thought*. See chap. on "Universal and particular."

¹¹ *Philosophy of Physics*, p. 43 (last few lines). Also *Where is Science going* p. 157 (last para). Planck speaks of the transcendental character of the causal concept.

¹² In *What Science Really Means*, pp. 173-5.

¹³ Erich Cassirer's *Determinismus und Indeterminismus in der Modernen Physik*. See for a summary of his view Philip Frank's essay *Determinism and Indeterminism in Between Physics and Philosophy*.

¹⁴ In *Philosophy and the Physicist* p. 209.

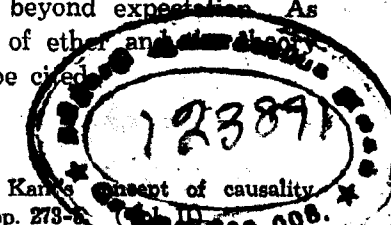
the processes of nature. Strict temporal succession in details of experience, they think, is an exacting demand. Such formulations are not convincing, but are a sort of makeshift; they are, at best, just patch-work when a rent has been made by Heisenberg's principle in our classical concept of causality.

This classical concept cannot be retained as the sole law now. If it is defined as a non-temporal logical function like the relation between ground and consequence, then only a ghost of the real concept lives. For if we take away temporality from causality, i.e. predictability from its function, we do not know what to make of it. Scientific philosophy cannot rise above time and space like Bosanquet or Spinoza and view the world as an accomplished fact. Kants' formulation of the causal principle in terms of time¹⁵ gives it just the significance and applicability in science as is necessary.

Formulation of the causal principle in a rough way, as simple laws of nature, is also an attempt to save it which in reality is an escape and which saves but the mere semblance of the law. For, if a law does not apply to individual events, as probability laws with regard to single sub-atomic occurrences do not, it is no law but an approximation to it. The kind of 'simple laws' must be admitted as the consequence of Heisenberg's principle, but they must not be regarded as satisfying the claim of strict causal laws, and must not be included among the latter as particular instances of the causal principle. They form a separate class, and they have a separate sphere of operation, which is sub-atomic regions.

The conclusion, therefore, seems to be irresistible that a duplication of the natural law must be admitted at this stage of scientific knowledge; the causal principle is not all in all, the sole law that governs all phenomena; there is some amount of indeterminacy in the sub-atomic regions where only approximate statistical laws operate which tell us only the probable behaviour of entities or probable occurrences. We should not be afraid of such a conclusion, for, as it has been seen often in the history of scientific philosophy, such initially discomforting and repugnant positions lead ultimately to far-reaching discoveries and philosophical syntheses which satisfy human intelligence beyond expectation. As an instance, the denial of the existence of ether and the theory of relativity which started from it may be cited.

¹⁵ And time plays an important part in Kant's concept of causality. See Paton's *Kant's Metaphysics of Experience*, pp. 273-6.



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