

DISCUSSION : I

SAJAHAN MIAH ON RUSSELL'S CONSTRUCTIONISM

Sajahan Miah wrote an interesting paper "Constructionism: Russell's Resolution of Realism-Empiricism Dilemma", published in the *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* (Vol. XXIV, No.4, Oct. 1997). In this paper, Miah attempts to explain how Bertrand Russell's theory of construction paved the way to resolve the Realism- Empiricism dilemma. Mr. Miah has to be congratulated for the pains he has taken in understanding and presenting Russell's views on this issue. However his paper contains certain conspicuous mistakes. The aim of this paper is to focus the lapses that Mr. Miah has committed in his presentation.

In the course of his presentation Miah observes that Russell embraced both realism and empiricism. However there "is a *prima facie* conflict between Russell's empiricist task of grounding all knowledge claims in sense-data and his realist view of the independently existing physical world...."¹. In order to resolve this conflict Russell upheld the causal theory of perception in his early work *PP*. * Subsequently Russell felt that the constructionist theory is advantageous over the causal theory in solving the realism and empiricism dilemma and hence he preferred constructionism to causal theory. Thus Miah writes: "Russell preferred the constructionist theory as more advantageous than The problem of philosophy theory in compromising between realism and empiricism".² What Miah means by *Problems of Philosophy* theory is the causal theory of perception which Russell committed in that work.³ The whole of Miah's paper centres round the above theme and this is what exactly I would like to refute. This is my first and foremost objection to Miah's paper. Had Miah gone through carefully the later works of Russell like *OP* and *MPD*, he would have not made such remarks. Miah's

observations on Russell's Philosophy of perception are only partial. They did not carry the full spirit of Russell's thoughts. It is true that Russell supported constructionism in his work *OKEW*, but he did not prefer this theory throughout his works. In his late work *OP*, which was published much later than his work *OKEW*, Russell upheld the causal theory of perception which he originally professed in his *PP*.

In his *OP* Russell remarks: "What is called a perception is only connected with its object through the laws of physics. Its relation to the object is causal and mathematical, we cannot say whether or not it resembles the object in any intrinsic respect, except that both it and the object are brief events in space time."⁴ In this context Russell says that the colours that the percipients see and the sounds they hear are events and these are only causally related to the physical object through the intermediary events. Therefore the data of perception that the observer sees should not be confused with the real qualities of the physical object. Russell writes: "where the philosopher's child at the zoo says 'There is a hippopotamus over there', the philosopher should reply: 'There is a coloured pattern of a certain shape, which may perhaps be connected with a system of external causes of the sort called a hippopotamus'.⁵

The causal theory of perception was also preferred by Russell in his much later work *MPD*. In this work Russell writes: "The world of which we have been speaking hitherto is entirely an inferential world."⁶ In this context Russell remarks: ".....the whole of what we perceive without inference belongs to our private world. In this respect I agree with Berkeley."⁷

Therefore it is obvious that Russell no more prefers the theory of construction in his late works like *OP* and *MPD*, but prefers in these works only the *Problems of Philosophy* theory or the causal theory of perception.

The question that agitates one's mind is why Russell had to switch over from one position to another in his different works. It appears that Russell's thinking was in oscillation between causal theory and constructionism (phenomenalism). In his *PP* Russell considered sense-data as mere appearances and not the real properties of the physical object. The physical

object, if any, acts as the sources of sense-data. The existence of the physical object cannot be perceived directly but could only be inferred as the source of sense-data. However Russell realised that such a theory makes the physical object very shadowy because we do not know its colours, shapes, sounds etc., and not even its space and time. The very existence of such an object is also doubtful. In order to avoid this embarrassing situation, Russell dispensed with the causal theory in his *OKEW* and subscribed to the constructionism, according to which the sense-data are no more appearances of the physical object, but constitute the real properties of the object. Thus the physical object is considered as a sum total of actual and possible sense-data.

Though the constructionist considers the sense-data while explaining the nature of the physical object and thus conceives the physical object as a concrete entity, still the theory of construction is not free from defects because it overlooks the significance of causal properties. For the constructionist, the physical object is identical with a set of sense-data and nothing more. But this is not so. The physical object could exhibit causal properties even in the absence of its sense-data. (For instance in complete darkness we may not get any sense-data of a wall, but its causal properties are observed while a ball is rebounded on throwing towards it). Therefore the constructionist's identification of the physical object with a set of sense-data alone is not correct. Being alive to this fact, Russell left constructionism and subscribed again to the causal theory in his late works.

Moreover Russell's fascination to physics and his attempt to introduce scientific method in philosophical inquiry, made him come back to the causal theory of perception which he professed initially in his *PP*. Thus, while dealing with the problem of perception Russell's thinking was in oscillation in between causal theory and constructionism and ultimately he preferred the causal theory.

In this context it is apt to mention H.H.Price, who made an improvement over that of Russell by attempting to reconcile between causal theory and phenomenalism (Constructionism). In his masterly work *Perception*, Price conceives physical object as an admixture of sense-data and

its causal properties. He writes that physical object is a complex of family of sense-data (actual and possible) and physical occupancy that exhibits its causal characteristics. For him, if we see a sense-datum 'S' of a physical object 'M', this means that the sense-datum 'S' is a member of the family 'F' where the family 'F' is coincident with the physical occupancy 'O', to constitute the physical object 'M'.⁸ Price calls this the "Collective Delimitation theory".⁹

Confining our discussion to Russell, it is obvious that Russell did not prefer the constructionism to causal theory as he came back to the causal theory in his late works. Russell's preference to the theory of construction is only transitory and not final. Therefore it is wrong on the part of Miah when he remarks that Russell preferred constructionism to the *Problems of Philosophy Theory* (causal theory). Miah's presentation has been abruptly stopped with Russell's *OKEW*. It did not progress further.

Secondly, Mr. Miah has not properly understood Russell's notion of 'Sensibilia'. This led Miah wrongly to distinguish between 'sensed sensibilia' and 'unsensed Sensibilia'. Throughout his paper Miah used frequently the term 'Unsensed Sensibilia'. He even quotes 'unsensed Sensibilia' as if it were the terminology of Russell. While wrongly quoting from Russell's work Miah writes, "Verification consists always in the occurrence of expected sense-data [unsensed Sensibilia]"¹⁰. If one goes through the text, it is obvious that Russell writes "verification consists always in the occurrence of an expected sense-datum."¹¹ Therefore what Miah puts in brackets [unsensed Sensibilia] is his interpretation and not Russell's words. However Mr. Miah puts them within double quotes as if they were the words of Russell. If we look carefully, it is clear that Russell distinguishes between sense-data and unsensed sense-data and call the latter, sensibilia. Russell argues that when the observer comes into contact with sensibilia, these will become sense-data just as a man becomes a husband on getting married. To quote Russell:

I shall give the name sensibilia to those objects which have the same metaphysical and physical status as sense-data, without necessarily being data to any mind. Thus the relation of a sensible to a sense-datum is like that of a man to a husband; a man becomes a

husband by being entering into the relation of marriage, and similarly a sensible, becomes a sensedatum by entering into a relation of acquaintance. It is important to have both terms; for we wish to discuss whether an object which is at one time a sense-datum can still exist at a time when it is not a sense-datum. We cannot ask; Can sense-data exist without being given?' for that is like asking 'can husbands exist, without being married?' we must ask can sensibilia exist without being given?' and also 'can a particular sensible be at one time, a sense-datum, and at another not? unless we have the word sensible as well as the word 'sense-datum', such questions are apt to entangle us in trivial logical puzzles."¹²

The moment the sensibilia are sensed by the observer, they are no more sensibilia, but get transferred into sense-data. Therefore the question of 'sensed sensibilia' does not arise. So also the very term 'Sensibilia indicates that they are unsensed. Hence to call unsensed Sensibilia' is superfluous. Therefore Miah's distinction between sensed sensibilia and 'unsensed Sensibilia' is baseless and his conception of 'unsensed Sensibilia' is a misnomer.

My third observation on Miah's paper is this. He mistakenly thought that 'realism' and 'representationalism' as two independent theses. This is evident when he said that the passages of Russell's work *PP* indicate about his explicit commitment "to two theses viz. the realist one that physical objects exist independent of perception and the representationalist one that physical objects are causes of our sense-data"¹³. But this is not a sound statement because representationalism is a form of realism and is not an independent thesis over and above realism. Naïve realism, representationalism (an early form of critical realism), neo-realism and new critical realism are the different stages in the development of realism. Russell's discussions of *P.P.* reflect his commitment to realism and this he expressed through his support to critical realism (representationalism). Therefore Miah should not think that Russell was committed to two theses - Realism and Representationalism. Representationalism is a part and parcel of realism.

To conclude my discussions: (1) Miah's view that Russell preferred

constructionism to inferential theory is false, as this is not true with reference to his late works like *OP* and *MPD*. (2) Miah's conception of "unsensed Sensibilia" is a misnomer and (3) Miah has mistakenly thought realism and representationalism as two independent theses.

B. SAMBSIVA PRASAD

NOTES

1. *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. XXIV, NO.4, Oct. 1997, p. 481.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 493.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 483.
 4. Russell, *An Outline of Philosophy*, pp. 154-55.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 291.
 6. Russell, *My Philosophical Development*, Unwin Books, 1975 p. 16.
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
 8. H.H.Price, *Perception*, p. 303.
 9. *Ibid.*,
 10. *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, *op. cit.*, p. 487.
 11. Bertrand Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, Reprint 1952., p. 89.
 12. Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*, pp. 148-49.
 13. *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, *op. cit.*, p. 482.
- * The abbreviations used in my discussion refer to the following works of Bertrand Russell. The years of their first publication are indicated in brackets. *PP* - *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912) *OKEW* - *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914) *OP* - *An Outline of Philosophy* (1927) *MPD* - *My Philosophical Development* (1959)

DISCUSSION -II

THE MESSAGE OF THE MĀṆḌŪKYA UPANIṢAD A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Phenomenological Analysis of Deep Sleep :

I want to make certain observations on the above paper of R. Puligandla (IPQ Vol. XXVI No.2 P.P. 221-32) partly appreciative and partly critical.

The author has done well in drawing attention of the western philosophers to the Indian thinkers, particularly to Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, for the analysis of the state of deep sleep. Even the psychologists have not taken care of this experience of deep sleep. The Advaitins particularly are greatly interested in this unique human experience for drawing significant conclusions regarding the nature of ultimate reality. Even the Indian yoga psychologists have paid their attention to sleep (*nidrā*), but the Western psychologists like Freud and Jung could not understand the deeper significance of the deep sleep. I wish that henceforth at least, the westerners will be alive to the meaningful experience of sleep to understand reality both subjectively and objectively, I too was wondering all these years that the most ancient Indian seers grasped this subject of sleep for study while the most learned thinkers of the occident would take sleep for granted as a very familiar and universal experience. Familiarity breeds contempt, indeed ! But I think, The phenomenological method can't be applied to ontological subject matter. The author of the paper has approached Māṇḍūkya from the phenomenological point of view, and whatever could be said he has done so.

But phenomenology has its own limitations and cannot bring out the essence of the subject under study, being of ontological or metaphysical nature and importance, as I view it to be.

The author has rightly raised the question, "How does one know that one had deep sleep on waking up, if one does not know that one is in deep sleep during the state of deep sleep?" In answer he has granted that there is a knowing that does not involve any mental activity-mental operations-and the knower is consciousness itself. He has also clarified the two senses that (1) consciousness is the ultimate necessary condition for any knowing, and (2) consciousness itself is knowledge. All mental knowledge is tripartite, namely, the knower, the known and the knowledge or activity of knowing, while Māṇḍūkya points out to non-partite knowledge. (p.222).

Thus the mystery of the knowledge of the deep sleep remains. The author has indirectly accepted this mystery of mental knowledge thrice in his paper by using the words, "Once one knows, *no matter how*, mind will simply report." According to the author this mental reporting is not remembering, since remembering is a mental activity. But how can we differentiate reporting from remembering, hence it remains a mystery which is hardly possible to overcome by a phenomenological approach. He uses the word *recover* (225), having the same difficulty as 'report'.

The phenomenological approach is limited to mental experiences only, and here is consciousness or knowledge which transcends mental activity. There is a certain sort of immediacy or intuition in this consciousness which cannot be the subject matter of phenomenology. Admitting that consciousness or *ātman* is an ontological subject matter, it cannot be made an object of phenomenological study or method. The noumenal and the phenomenal are two distinctive realms not on the same par.

Controversy Regarding Tripartite and Non tripartite Knowledge :

This is the epistemico-ontological controversy between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on the one hand and Ramanujacārya and the other non-advaitins, on the other

hand. For the non-dualists or the absoluteists the ultimate reality is of the nature of knowledge itself wherein the other two elements or aspects are inherent, namely being and bliss, That is, Ātman or Brahman is of the nature of sat-cit-ānanda. These aspects are distinguished in their connotations, but cannot be separated in their denotation, which is the one without any second.

Thus for the non-dualist ontologists there is knowledge in itself which is beyond the differentiations of the tripartite divisions or beyond any dualism of the subject- object, subject-predicate or the substance -attribute, or any relationship between the two.

But for Rāmānuja and the others there is no knowledge worth the name where the tripartite or dualistic division does not take place. Hence they do not accept Śāṅkaracharya's Nirgun Brahman, and subscribe to the ultimacy, in one way or the other, of the Saguna Brahman. They interpret the meanings of nirguṇa and saṁguṇa in their own way to suit their ontological stand point, which are only apparently monistic.

The author rightly accepts the non dualistic Vedānta point of view, but mere phenomenology cannot lead to such a point of view, unless it is presupposed independently by the author, in spite of his phenomenological approach to the problem.

Caitanya (spirit) and Manas (mind) Distinguished :

Mind is normally divided by the psychologist into the conscious, subconscious and unconscious. If this is right, then where does the basic consciousness as understood by its meaning (1), stand in relationship to these three divisions of mind? According to this meaning consciousness is the very necessary condition of any knowing. It is again according to the meaning (2) identical with knowledge itself. In any opinion, neither of the three divisions of mind, accepted by the psychologist have anything to do with the foundational or ground consciousness. It is absolute unconditional consciousness, unlike that of the mind. My submission is that the term consciousness has been confused with psychological consciousness. The foundational

reality is cit or caitanya it, is spiritual in nature, altogether different from the psychological consciousness. While for the phenomenologist, what he calls intentional consciousness, is his proper subject-matter, he cannot confuse it with the non-intentional consciousness, to call it non-intentional is to accept its altogether non-mental character. It is the proper subject matter of ontology or metaphysics, which does not come within the survey or perview of the phenomenologist.

The Three Mental states and the Fourth non-state :

Mind while awake has external objects, while in dream has internal objects. And it is said that while in deep sleep has no objects whatsoever. While it is true to say that the deep sleep has neither the external nor the internal positive objects, it is not true to say that it has no object or objects at all in that experience. The experience is described as "I slept happily, I did not know anything ' (sukham aham asvapam, na kincidapi avediami). The kind of knowledge that takes place here is both positive and negative. There is positively an enjoyment of bliss, and negatively there is absence of objects, or to put in other words, non-existence of objects itself constitute an object of knowledge. It is still a mental knowledge of a sort, of a superior nature than that of the other two states. It must not be forgotten that just as the two states of waking and dreaming are there, yet there is a third state of dreamless deep sleep. These three are mental states (avasthātraya: Jagrat, svapna and suṣupti). So long as the states are there, these are only the mental or intentional states, whether the objects are positive or negative, or mixed. There can be knowledge of the non-existence of the object so when I say. "There is no flower pot on the table."

In order to distinguish from these three states, that the fourth (turiya) is spoken of, but which, it must be understood not as a state, but spiritual reality itself which does not have or come within any, state. Therefore, the various stotras (praise-poems) of god or Goddess as *Sri Gaṇapati Atharvaśīrṣa* or *Devi Atharvaśīrṣa* describe them as beyond the three states (avasthā trayāṭita); identifying the Deity with the Ātman or Brahman, as the absolute

reality.

Author's awkward interpretation of turiyā :

Turiyā is thus the reality which is above mind and anything that is mental, Ātman is beyond *manas*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *ahaṅkāra*. Therefore, there cannot be, by definition itself, a phenomenological study of the transcendental, that is, transmental reality of Ātman. But the author insists upon this self-contradictory study of the ontological reality through phenomenology, which deals merely with the appearances. He actually blames the commentaries for not offering "any phenomenological clarification of turiyā (227). But, in my opinion, the commentaries are right in not attempting to do the impossible. The author's phenomenological interpretation of *turiyā* is as follows, "*turiyā* is just like the state of deep sleep, except for one important difference: the difference is that whereas during deep sleep one does not know one is in deep sleep, in *turiyā* one does know that one is in deep sleep." I consider this to be the most awkward interpretation. He further says that, "this is the mode of highest wakefulness"(228). The highest reality can have no modes, but for the author *turiyā* is a mode. He again says that in this mode of highest wakefulness, "I am" persists even when there are no objects," though he admits that 'I' is not to be identified with ego. But actually the highest reality of the spirit or self or Brahman is without any 'I' or 'thou', the subject and the object. It cannot be brought down to the lower phenomenological level of appearances.

It is not clear as to how by the application of the phenomenological method of analysis the author jumps to the conclusion that what happens in *turiyā* is the realization of Ātman, Brahman, immortality of one's going beyond birth and death. That this is the highest philosophical and religious goal that sages exhort us to attain, during this life, and not after death, and that it is a life of freedom from pain and suffering, of peace and joy. To me it appears that the author reads this already framed belief or bias for advaitism in his phenomenological study, rather than a logically drawn conclusion from his study.

Turiyā stands for the transcendent :

The highest misjudgement of his is when he says "that in the teaching of the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad there is no transcendental Focus. focus such as God, the Devil, Judgement, heaven hell etc.... There is a sense in which we are always in *turiyā* " This only means that *Ātman* is omnipresent.

Turiyā though called fourth is not to be understood, according to me, as at the top of the vertical stages of the three states, rather it runs parallel but having no direct relationship with the three states. It is wholly transcendent to them, and hence cannot be grasped in terms of any ordinary categories. This will be clear from the following quotation from the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*.

वैश्वानरः प्रथम पादः । तैजसो द्वितीयः पादः । प्राज्ञः तृतीय
पादः । एष सर्वेश्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभवामयौ हि
भूतनाम् । नान्तः प्रज्ञं न बहिःप्रज्ञं नोभयतः प्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ॥
अदृष्टं अव्यवहार्यं, अग्राह्यं अलक्षणं अचिन्त्यं अव्यपदेश्यं एकात्मप्रत्ययसारं
प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं. शिवं अद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥ १.१२

This refers to the four aspects of the AUM or of soul and its states. The *Viśvanara* (*jagrat*), *Taijas* (*Swapna*), *Prajñā* (*sleep*) the fourth being *Ātman* proper, transcending the three souls, their bodies and their states. It is important that, unlike the author's claim, the *Prajñā* is described as God (*Sarveśvara*), "the Lord of all, the omniscient, the inner controller, of all, the origin and end of all beings. contrasted with these stands the *Ātman* (who is *dehatraya*ṭṭiḥ, transcending the three bodies called *Sthula*, *sukṣma*, *kasthya* , as much as the three states. This is what is philosophically, called the *Absolute* or *Brahman*. It is described as, "neither inwardly nor outwardly cognitive, nor yet on both sides together, It is not a cognition mass, and is neither knower nor not-knower. It is invisible, impracticable, incomprehensible, indescribable, unthinkable and, unpointable. Its essence is the intuitive knowledge or experiences of itself. It negates the whole expanse of the universe, and is tranquil and blissful and without a second. This is known as

the fourth, the Ātman, which is to be understood."

The above is the description of the transcendental, ontological, metaphysical reality which has nothing to do with any psychological consciousness. Ātman or Brahman is the spiritual reality *caitanya*, not to be identified with any aspect of mental consciousness. The misunderstanding is caused by the usual but unfortunate translation of *cit* or *caitanya* as consciousness.

Thus, in spite of the author's otherwise wishes, this Upaniṣad does contain the transcendental focus- focus of the Absolute which relegates God to the Prajñā stage or state. Hence I think that this is not a proper subject for phenomenological analysis for drawing any final conclusion about the transcendental Absolute Reality. As shown above the author accepts "that there is a knowing that does not involve any mental operations." (222). The Absolute is thus known transcending mental operations by what is known as unmanibhāva. Phenomenological study is obviously of mental operations only, and cannot be undertaken significantly for any study of the transcendent which is in my opinion the essential subject matter of Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad.

A. G. JAVADEKAR

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 Department of Philosophy
 University of Poona,
 Pune 411 007

DISCUSSION III

A NOTE ON SOME IDENTITY SENTENCES OF NYĀYA AND ADVAITA VEDĀNTA

Language analysis is very important for any kind of speculation - particularly if it is Philosophical. The ascertainment, the consequent discussion, the debate - everything is impossible without the help of language analysis. Language is absolutely necessary for communication. What is language? It is, in a sense, a sumtotal of meaningful sentences (vākya). Vākya-rtha-vicāraṇa or scrutiny of the meaning of sentences is important for any philosophical discussion. It has been maintained by the Advaita Vedānta philosophers that in order to realize Brahman (Brahmāvagati) the scrutiny of the meaning of sentences (vākya-rtha vicāraṇa) is in a way indispensable. (Of course this vākya-rtha vicāraṇa here refers to the consideration of the Vedāntic sentences).

In this Note I shall try to deal with a certain class of sentences, which are known to be identity sentences (of course with a limited examples). Identity sentence has been taken here in a wide sense. A question may be raised as to why I have selected such a class? The mahāvākyas of Advaita Vedānta are identity sentences. These do not exhaust the total class of identity sentences. But undoubtedly these sentences are very significant as they express the metaphysical truth accepted by the Advaita Vedāntins. Hence the justification of the topic. As is clear from the title I shall not confine my discussion within the boundary of a Advaita Vedānta. I shall also try to clarify the notion of identity sentence as accepted by the Nyāya philosophers with the help of certain accepted examples of identity sentence.

But before this discussion we must have some idea of what a sentence

is. A sentence is a concatenation of padas or words. Any concatenation however does not constitute a vākya or sentence. The words that form a sentence must have ākāṁkṣā and āsatti. Besides the words must be associated with yogyatā and tātparya. Thus generally it is accepted that the cognition of ākāṁkṣā, yogyatā, sannidhi and tātparya are operative in the generation of verbal cognition that issues from a series of words.¹

In any categorical sentence there are two parts - subject (uddeśya) and predicate (vidheya). Informally a subject is that about which something is said and a predicate is what is said about the subject. The property that limits uddeśya is called the uddeśyatāvacchedaka and the property that limits vidheya is called the vidheyatāvacchedaka. In the case of a meaningful sentence generating verbal cognition the uddeśyatāvacchedaka and the vidheyatāvacchedaka must be different. If in a sentence like expression these turn out to be identical, the expression becomes repetitive and thus would serve no purpose. Such expressions are therefore at best pseudo sentences. Suppose there is a series of words- 'Rama is Rama'. ('Rāmaḥ Rāmaḥ'). These words will not constitute a sentence proper until and unless the property qualifying the subject and the property qualifying the predicate are different. If this stipulation is correct then we can understand that among the two kinds of identity sentences - informative and non-informative only the informative identity sentences are considered to be sentences proper. The non-informative identity sentences lack cognitive value and thus are pseudo sentences. For example a Nyāya philosopher would say that 'Rama is Rama' ('Rāmaḥ Rāmaḥ') is a pseudo sentence while 'Rama is the eldest son of Daśaratha' ('Rāmaḥ Daśarathasya Jyeṣṭhāputraḥ') is considered to be a sentence proper. It is hard for the ordinary people to accept such a position though the Nyāya philosophers claim that all of their views conform to commonsense. The Naiyāhikas try to defend their case strongly against the charges of the ordinary people as well as the opponent philosophers. Gadādhara in his Vyutpattivādaḥ, has given a detailed exposition of this. He has taken as an example the following expression 'Ghataḥ Ghataḥ, - i.e., 'The pot is pot', The attacks and the counter-attacks centre around different analyses of this expression. We will cite here only one of the analyses.- A

charge may be put against the Nyāya philosophers in this way. If 'The pot is blue' ('Nīlaḥ Ghataḥ') is a sentence proper, then 'The pot is pot' ('Nīlaḥ Ghataḥ') is also a sentence in this sense, because these two combinations of words have the same syntactic structure. Considering the Sanskrit expressions. We may say that in both sentences, the subject term and the predicate term have the same nominal ending. Moreover, the Neo Nyāya philosophers have admitted sentences like 'The pot is a blue pot' ('Nālaḥ nīlaghataḥ') on the ground that here something more is said in the predicate than in the subject. The objection runs that when we assert this sentence, we surely assert that 'The pot is pot' (Ghataḥ Ghataḥ). Unless 'The pot is pot', the pot cannot be a blue pot.

The Naiyāyikas very rightly point out that there is a difference between the status of the two sentences. This is clear from the structure and from the causes that produce them. Unless we recollect the referents of the words constituting the sentence, we cannot understand it. This differs in each pair of the two sentences we are concerned with. In the first case, when we consider the sentence 'The pot is blue' we surely have to recollect Blue qualified by Blueness. This is not a precondition for the sentence. The pot is pot similarly when we consider the sentence 'The pot is a blue pot', we have to accept as its precondition the recollection of Blue pot qualified by Blueness and potness from the corresponding word. This is absent in the case of 'The pot is pot'. Therefore 'The pot is blue' or 'The pot is a blue pot' may be regarded as sentences generating verbal cognition, but 'The pot is pot' is not a sentence in the proper sense.²

This kind of conclusion is accepted by the Vedānta philosophers also. The repetitive sentences are discarded. Both the Vedānta philosophers and the Nyāya philosophers admit that in order to have verbal cognition, there is the requirement of ākāṃkṣā, yogyatā, āsatti and tātparya and last but not the least the requirement of separate uddeśyatāvachchedaka and vidheyatāvacchedaka. It is to be remembered that the explanations of the preconditions of verbal cognition as proposed by the Advaita Vedānta philosophers and the Nyāya philosophers differ in many respects though they agree in the point that repetitive sentences are redundant.

Now, according to the Advaita Vedāntin a sentence or vākya can be of two types - sakhaṇḍārthaka. This sakhaṇḍārthaka vākya can again be divided into two types - abhedasaṃsargāthāka and bhedasamsargārthāks. The concept of akhaṇḍārthaka vākya is an Advaita Vedāntin concept. We can easily understand the sakhaṇḍārthaka vākya. It is saṃsargārthaka, that is, from it we have a cognition, about some relation among the relata. A sentence is a combination of different words. Those words signify different referents. When a relation is established among these referents, then and then only verbal cognition is generated. If the relation is that of identity, then the verbal cognition is called verbal cognition expressing identity (abhedasaṃsargārthaka). If the relation is that of non-identity, then the verbal cognition is called verbal cognition expressing non-identity (bhedasamsargārthaka) suppose there is a sentence 'Nīlah, Ghataḥ' ('The jar is blue'). the referents signified by 'nīlah' and 'ghata' are related by the relation of identity.

But if we take the sentence 'Ghatasya rūpam', the referent of the sixth case-ending attached to 'ghata' would be related with the referent of 'ghata' by the relation of nirūpitatva (being determined) which is not one of identity.

We think that identity sentences with which we dealt upto now fall under the class of abhedasaṃsargārthāka vākya. But problem arises regarding the akhaṇḍārthaka vākya. Just in the beginning it was stated that the mahāvākyas are also identity sentences. They of course are so. But it is accepted in the Advaita Vedānta that a mahāvākya is Akhaṇḍārthaka i.e. signifies Akhaṇḍārtha - which is Unqualified, Non-relational Brahman. That means it expresses no relation - not even that of identity. That is, it is not abhedasaṃsargārthaka. These mahāvākyas are not identity sentences in the ordinary sense.

Let us take one of the mahāvākyas - 'Tat tvam asi' - ('That are thou'). The meaning of this vākya is Akhaṇḍārtha. As has already been stated it means Non-relational, Unqualified Brahman. So it does not indicate any relation. A relation requires at least two relata. Brahman is only one ('Ekamevādviṭiyam'). So He is non-relational (Asaṃsṛṣṭra). If we try to

analyse and understand the mahāvākya 'Tat tvam asi' - we find out that 'tat' indicates Parokṣa Sarvagña caitanya and 'tvam' indicates Aparokṣa Alpajña Caitanya. How can these indicate Akhaṇārtha? The customary explanation is this we have to abandon the direct significatory capacity or 'Śakti' of the words. We have to take help of lakṣaṇā or indirect significatory capacity of the referent (padārtha) as indicated by the terms. The Vedānta view is that lakṣaṇā is connected with padārtha, while śakti is connected with pada.³ This is not the Nyāya view. The Naiyāyikas held that both śakti and lakṣaṇā belong to the padas. Anyway, by the lakṣaṇā we get only caitanya from both 'that' and 'tvam'. This caitanya is Akhaṇārtha Brahman, who is Asaṁsṛṣṭa. Hence no question of relation arises here.

If we keep in mind the metaphysical theory of Advaita Vedānta then the explanation is acceptable. But for the common people or say for the Nyāya philosophers a question may arise. If 'Tat tvam asi' is an identity sentence, cannot we hold that a relation is there, which is the relation of identity? The referent of 'tat' and the referent of 'tvam' are related by the relation of identity. Actually when the Vedāntins are analysing 'Tat tvam asi', it is the vyavahārika level and there is kathaṅcit bheda of abheda. But when one has the aparokṣa jñāna the level is changed and a non-relational cognition is there (if it is said be cognition at all).

The fact these objections cannot influence the Vedānta philosophers, because their conception of 'tādātmya' is different from the conception of 'tādātmya' of the Nyāya philosophers. For the Vedānta philosophers any relation requires two relata, even if it be the relation of tādātmya. It cannot be said that there is any other object than Brahman who is Akhaṇārtha. Hence akhaṇārthaka vākya does not indicate any relation. For the Vedāntins abheda means bhedasahiṣṇu abheda, which is not necessary for be Naiyāyikas.

Another problem regarding this sort of identity sentence is very acute. According to the Advaita Vedānta philosophers these mahāvākyas generate śabda aparokṣa jñāna or nirvikalpaka jñāna. So we are coming to the position that there may be some vākyas or sentences that do not generate

verbal cognition. why cannot these produce verbal cognition? Because the preconditions of verbal cognition are absent there. By the preconditions we mean ākāmṣā, yogyatā, sannidhi etc. Each of these conditions involves relation. Ākāmṣā is abhidhānāparyavasānam. Yogyatā is ekapadārthe aparapadārthavatta. Sannidhi is the presence of relata without any time gap. As Akhaṇḍārtha does not involve any relation, the mahāvākya indicating Akhaṇḍārtha is not associated with ākāmṣā, yogyatā, sannidhi etc. Hence it does not produce verbal cognition. If anybody understands this mahāvākya, then he may have perceptual cognition which is nirvikalpaka or unqualified.

The Nyāya philosophers may ponder upon this position. Because I think that they will have no difficulty in accepting that verbal cognition may be generated from 'Tat tvam asi'. This can be treated as an informative identity sentence in another way. If we consider the vākyārthas of 'tat' and 'tvam' then we find that as their avacchedakas differ so in the sentence 'Tat tvam asi' the uddeśyatāvacchedaka and the vidheyatāvacchedaka are different. Hence there is no problem in regarding this sentence as a sentence proper which can generate verbal cognition. Though such an explanation is possible it is doubtful whether the Nyāya philosophers are ready to accept this as an identity sentence, (though this is so in yathāśrutārthe). Because the Nyāya philosophers accept the difference between jīva and Brahman.

Perhaps for the ordinary identity sentence the explanation proposed by the Nyāya philosophers is not so much different from the explanation of the Vedānta philosophers. But as their ontologies differ, there is difference of opinion regarding the analysis of the mahāvākyas like 'Tat tvam asi'.

BRINDA SEN

NOTES

1. Ākāmṣā is abhidhānāparyavasānam. According to the Nyāya philosophers it is padagata, while the Vedāntins take this to be padārthagata. Yogyatā is ekapadārthe aparapadārthavattā. Sannidhi is avilambena padārthopasthiti. It depends upon the pronunciation of the padas. Tātparya is the intention of the speaker.

2. For a detailed discussion of the identity sentences from the Nyāya point of view please see Brinda Sen, 'Some problems regarding the identity statements' in *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol XIII, Nos. 3&4 July-Sept. and Oct-Dec, 1986.
3. For the explanation of 'Tat tvam asi' see the relevant portions from Sadānandayogindrasarasvatī, *Vedāntasāra* and Dharmarājadhvarīndra, *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*.

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 Indian Philosophical Quarterly
 Department of Philosophy
 University of Poona,
 Pune 411 007

DISCUSSION IV

DRavid AND THE IDENTITY - STATEMENTS : SOME DIFFICULTIES

In his note¹ on Dyakrishna's paper² Dravid has expressed his differences in treating the Mahavakya Tattvam asi to be of the same type as Frege's statement 'The morning star is the evening star' along with many other issues which he discussed at length. A reply from Dr Dayakrishna is expected and awaited; but in the meanwhile some points in Dravid's note need a clarification for which this note is being written. The points in which the difficulties occur can be put as follows; but before that there is a point which needs to be mentioned. The two alleged statements belong to two different schools of philosophy, having almost nothing in common. It is therefore very difficult to assert or refute a point by using the tools of a different philosophical school. Such an attempt has a way of arguing at cross purposes which does not confirm or confute any thesis.

(1) Dravid rightly disagrees with Dayakrishna's view that the *Mahāvākya* and Frege's statement face the same problem. For he (Dravid) has rightly pointed out that the *Mahāvākyas* expresses the identity of two distinct entities, while the Fregean statement asserts that the two expressions concerned stand for one and the same entity, i.e. have identical reference. Now if Frege's statement is regarded as the true identity statement, then the *Mahāvākya* ceases to be the identity-statement; and if at all it is to be treated as the identity-statement, then it will be the false one. Dravid agrees with this view, and accordingly remarks, 'If the referends were different, then the statement would be false...' (*Ibid.* p. 534) Now what standpoint should a reader take in deciding the identity of these statements? If we follow Frege, then a statement expressing the identity of two entities cannot be called an

identity-statement. Thus the *Mahāvākya* will have to be declared as false. The sense in which the *Mahāvākya* *That thou art* is an identity-statement has not been made clear.

(2) On page 536 (*IPQ*:Oct. '98 issue) Dravid remarks that even though the adjectives are treated like names, and their identity is established, the main purpose of discussing the sentence would have been defeated. When Dravid talks of the denotative view of names, he seems to mean that names have only connotation and no denotation. But understood in this sense, i.e. in the denotative sense only, no identity-statement of the type $a=b$ can be asserted where 'a' and 'b' have only a denotation. One may recall here that the distinction between sense and reference intended by Frege is applicable to names concepts (or definite descriptions) and also to propositions. Dravid's above remark, therefore, needs clarification. The point to be noted is that mere names will not enable us to see whether they refer to one and the same thing. In each case one will have to identify the reference *via* the sense of the term. Thus 'Scott is the author of *Waverley*' and 'The author of *Waverley* is the author of *Marmion*' are both identity-statements, the linguistic expression in each standing for one and the same entity in each of propositions. Dravid's remark mentioned at the beginning of this para goes against what he says on p. 538, where he says 'If names were supposed to be demonstrative, or they simply name things, in either case one and the same thing may quite well be denoted or named by different names, and be described by different expressions'. However, as has already been seen, names cannot be exclusively taken as demonstratives.

(3) Towards the end of his discussion-note Dravid analyses the Fregean identity-statement 'The morning star is the evening star' from the Nyaya point of view. This analysis, according to him, leads us to the conclusion that what the original statement means is that one property, viz. the evening-starness is the predicate ascribed to the planet as characterized by the property morning-starness. It is not clear how far this analysis can help in establishing any of the features of the original statement made by Frege. The purpose of making such an analysis is simply made unknown. This analysis does not shed any light on any of the features of the original

identity-statement which Frege could not reveal so far. This analysis also presents a problem how far feasible and worthwhile it is to analyse a statement of one philosophical system by using the tools of an entirely alien, different system of philosophy. Would a Naiyāyika like any part of his system analysed with the help of the tools entirely alien to it? Again Dravid appears to try to reduce Frege's form of the statement to subject-predicate form of statement, but this does not seem to be possible by subjecting it to the Nyāya analysis.

(4) Dravid says that the statement 'The pot is a material substance', would be relatively simple, and, so to say, a better example than the statement 'The morning-star is the evening-star' of Frege. If Dravid wants Frege's statement replaced by the above statement, then that statement should also be the identity-statement like 'The morning-star....the evening-star'. But the two statements are entirely different. 'The pot is a material substance' can hardly be called an identity-statement. In the above statement the term pot is a singular term, but the phrase 'a material substance' is not a definite description; it is phrase standing for a property and the statement would be of the subject-predicate form, and not an identity statement. If we write this sentence in Sanskrit as 'Ghataḥ Dravyam (or Padārthaḥ)', then since the two terms are in the same (nominative) case, as per the Nyāya rule of *śābdabodh* there will be the non-difference (*abheda*) between the padas. It means whatever is known as a *ghata*, is also known as *dravyam* (or *padārtha*). This non-difference of the terms, however, does not make the statement an identity-statement.

If we now analyse the above statement from the point of view of techniques used in Western logic, we find that it can be called either (1) class-membership statement or (2) as one expressing the relationship between a determinate and a determinable. This statement is thus similar to (1) 'Red is colour' or (2) 'A flea is an insect'. It is thus clear that Dravid's statement is not an identity-statement, and is not a substitute to Frege's example at all. The Non-difference between the terms revealed by the Nyāya analysis, and the identity between the two terms revealed by Frege, will have to be distinguished, and kept apart so as to avoid the confusion. It is now clear

that the Mahāvākya, and Frege's statement are not of the same type. However the sense in which the Mahāvākya is regarded as identity-statement has not been made clear.

B.Y.DESHPANDE

NOTES

1. *I.P.Q.* Oct. '98 pp. 532-546.
2. *Ibid.* Jan. '98 pp. 1-15.