PRESENT RELEVANCE OF INDIAN PERCEPTION OF VALUES AND MORALITY

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Abstract: A duty is a moral duty performed to others for the welfare of those to whom we perform. Isolated from the purpose of welfare, no duty is moral. Exchangeability is the factor that causes value. The desires, through actions/duties toward others, are exchanged for values, that is, welfare in general. A man is not a man if isolated from such values as truth, non-violence, sacrifice (Tyāga), austerity (tapa), compassion (dāya), charity (dāna), and duty to others (dharma). Following essential values is a must for continuing to be a member of the family, society, and nation. Similarly, there are some natural values, such as care, love, kindness, co-operation, fraternity, and respect, without which humans will cease to be so in society. Based on the metaphysical background of the idea that the entire globe is a family (vasudhaiva kutumkam), as found in popular Purāṇas like the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, a conduct is moral if one does only what he/she would have others do to him/her. Negatively, 'do not conduct that you do not want others to conduct to you (Ātmanaḥ pratikulāni pareṣām na samācaret, Padma purāṇ, sṛṣṭi parva, 19/357). Here, the use of the term 'ātmanaḥ' restricts the ego and the consequent hedonistic desires that are popularly taken as the cause of incentive to an action. Soul is consciousness, and the same is knowledge, the highest value that everyone loves and nobody hates or thinks to hurt the self. What is dear to you is dear to others as well. Thus, morally, a conduct is perceived in a way you love to do to others and like others to do to you.

The term "Dharma," derived from the root dhṛ, refers to human values such as patience, fortitude, perseverance, endurance, calmness, and courage that give meaning to life, both individual and social. It is used for values and moral duties as well. It, in the derivation 'Dhārṇāt dharma', is the principle that holds or possesses the individuals and society, and in derivation 'dhārayate dharma', the principle that sustains, maintains, and governs the people and society (Dhārṇād dharma ityāhuḥ dharmo dhārayate prajāḥ, (Manusmṛti. 8/15). In both derivations, it is the Sanātana principle of a virtuous life and the welfare of humanity.

Time is alarming for the individual and the nation. In the name of changes for a modern lifestyle, floating different materialistic ideologies from different corners of the world are trying to disturb the cultural beauty of the society and the nation. They are misleading the people and countries like India, which is well established in the values and morality of the spiritual way of life. Directly and indirectly, through power, politics, and disguised exercises, utilitarian ideologies seek to confuse, divide, and create conflicts among citizens, thereby destabilizing the nation. With their hedonistic materialistic ideologies, they try to create confusion about our culture and the Śāsras with their malevolent intention and evil mission in India to make the freedom of the citizens and the sovereignty of the country dependent on them. They attempt to ridicule our virtues, values, and morality, which we traditionally uphold as the basis for being a good person and a good society. They want to exploit the beauty of Indian people who, by nature, care for the good of others before caring for the good of themselves. Indian people, by nature, think about freedom from colonial ideologies, political and economic dependency, and manage well, wisely, and peacefully the communal, racial, and economic wars of the imperialistic and expansionistic powers. It is why, everywhere except India, there is war or a war-like situation, but India is gradually progressing. I perceive it as the victory of spiritual values and morality over utilitarianism.

Nationalism in the true sense is an ethical issue; it is about respecting the will and interests of citizens in making decisions and executing them to uplift the lives of citizens and the nation, and avoiding disrespecting international treaties that benefit the nation.

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Nationalism can be understood through the values and ethics of a nation's culture, including respect for international treaties and communities.

Ethically and philosophically, Indians have a cultural urge for freedom from the imprisonments of their minds, live a life of values, and work for the welfare of humanity because they love all, inside and out, with the same spirit. There is an idea that works behind the welfare of humanity, and that is, to break the barriers limiting the illumination of the spirit. *If Bhārata is the Body, then Sanātana is its soul*. Usually, overlooking the organic system of society, the antagonists seize on any concept of Indian culture and cryptically criticize it from a foreign perspective, thereby trying to mislead the people through false narratives crafted by themselves. Materialistic cultures may be politically right in their efforts to strengthen their national interests. However, their covert attempts to make other countries politically and economically dependent on them are immoral because they undermine the sovereignty of developing countries struggling for development. It is their cryptic move to make the Indian people morally down on the Indian people who trust in development based on honest labour, truth, non-violence, and the welfare of humanity.

The principles and laws of body and mind, mind and nature, and nature and cosmos are interconnected institutions of the organic system of cosmic moral principle or creative moral principle (Ṛta). The laws of cosmic moral principle (Ṛta) operate as the laws of nature and of human intellect as well. Nobody can harm for a long time the laws of the intellect of those who live a life in harmony with the laws of nature. The truth prevails (Satyameva Jayate).

I. Class System of Puruṣa-sūkta in the Organic Concept of Society

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The Puruṣa-sūkta of the Vedas is often misinterpreted and misunderstood by opponents as a division of society into higher and lower classes. However, this is not true in view of the Vedic organic concept of society. All four classes (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, and śūdra) in the Sūkta are presented as the four major parts of the body of the cosmic Puruṣa. The Vedas, Smṛtis, and Purāṇas are venerated as the four pillars of society and are equally respected for the existence, maintenance, and development of society and the surrounding nature. Here is tremendous respect for the diversity in the system, as Puruṣa has taken all forms of creation.

The Vedic verse 'Brāhmaṇo'sya mukhamāsīd bāhū rājanyaḥ kṛtaḥ. Urū tadasya yadvaiśyaḥ padābhyām Śūdro ajāyata (Ṛgveda, Mandal 10; sūkta 90, verse 12) is often misinterpreted by those unaware of the spirit of Indian culture, which is eternally relevant to life and society. Any misinterpretation is dishonesty not only with the principled ideas of the sūkta but also with the organic concept of the Vedic theory. Such interpretations as that cause doubt about the intellectuality of one who misunderstands or misinterprets the meaning or sense of the above verse, so it is an overlooking of the verses 13-14 that read Chandramā manaso jātaścakṣoḥ sūryo ajāyata. Mukhādindraścāgniśca prāṇādvāyurajāyata (Ṛgveda, Mandal 10; sūkta 90, verse 13). Nābhyām āsīdantarikṣam śīrṣṇo dyouḥ samavartata. Padabhyām bhūmiḥ diśaḥ śrotrāt tathāmlokām akalpayan (Ṛgveda, Mandal 10; sūkta 90, verse 14). According to which Śūdra is born from the feet of Virāta puruṣa; the feet in verse 14 are such that from which not only the Earth is created, but all the directions (diśāyen) are also created by the feet (Padabhyām bhūmiḥ diśaḥ). Thus, the Vedas have a qualitative perception of the merits of śūdras born from the feet of the Divine Puruśa, who is the creator of the Earth and all the directions (diśāyen) as well.

These verses are visions of the seers in response to the question of naming the creation of the parts of the cosmic body of the Puruṣa – 'what part of Puruṣa was his mouth, arms, what were its thighs, and what were its feet called? (Ṛgveda, Mandal 10, sūkta 90, verse -11), The Vedic seers establish the identification of the Puruṣa's parts. According to the verse, the Brāhmaṇa (priestly class) was its mouth, its arms became Kṣatriyas (the warrior class), the Vaiśyas (business class) formed the mid part (thigh), and the legs of the cosmic Puruṣa are Śūdras (serving class). "Brāhmaṇo'sya mukhamāsīd bāhū rājanyaḥ kṛtaḥ. Urū tadsya yadvaiśyam padābhyam Śūdro ājāyata," Ṛgveda, Mandal 10, sūkta 90, verse -12). The Sūkta,

for the first time in the history of humankind, establishes the organic concept of society's creation through the division of labor. Brāhmaṇas are all those who are intelligence-dominated (sattva) and have cultivated an attitude and the potential to teach and cultivate others' wisdom in their business, skill, and expertise. The word "Kṣatriya" stands for the warrior class, who feel emotions or emotions to fight with a sword to protect against the dangers that fall on the rest of the members of society or of the country. The Vaiśyas are those having domination by temperance and contentedness and whose nature is to produce the commodities and to distribute them in a proportionate way in society. Śūdras are those having natural fitness to serve the rest of the three pillars of society.

Svādhyāya, Tyāga, Tapa with Brāhmaṇa class; they kept begging from the rest of the three classes for their livelihood; temperance and courage to protect the society from the inner and outer dangers with Kṣatiyas; production, distribution in proportion to the requirement of society with Vaiśyas, and serving and thus helping the works of the rest of the society with Śūdras are the virtues that gave identity to the four classes. In all the cases, the virtue of a Brāhmaṇa is to maintain the dharma and to keep the other sections of the society aware of the dharmas by teaching, preaching, and living dharma. Bhāhmaṇas devote their lives to uplifting all classes of society, morally and spiritually enriching the economically rich classes, and cultivating the economically rich classes morally fit to uplift economically and financially the poor and needy. In Manu Smriti, all four classes are cultural identities, not castes. The division of classes of the dynamic theory of the organic society, well principled in Dharmaśāstras, is based on their excellence in performing the specific works and proportion of their cultivation, and not on castes based on birth.

The antagonist interprets this theory as the division of society into higher and lower classes and sees this as the root cause of cultural differences among people in different classes. Class division is based on work distribution according to the nature, quality, and excellence in performing duties, which is not caste-based on birth. Due to misinterpretation by the antagonists, several complexities, perversions, and conflicts over cultural differences emerged among the different classes in Indian life. Nevertheless, even a fool can understand that his own body is an organic whole in which different parts perform different functions and help complete the unity of the body. The mouth cannot perform the function of the feet, and the feet cannot perform the function of the mouth. As the mind guides the other parts of the body to work, Brāhmaṇa teach and guide the classes of society in their work. Moreover, none of the classes is higher or lower. In the dynamic system of classes, those Brāhmaṇas, fallen from their classes to Śūdra, are Śūdras, and similarly, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, fallen from their duties, are also Śūdras. However, Śūdras uplifted by their duties to any of the Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya classes are no longer Śūdra. There is no mention of the term Śūdra in the Constitution of the Republic of India. However, even now, some shortsighted politicians are pursuing a separatist political agenda and are overlooking the richness of our cultural unity in diversity. They are wrongly motivating a large section of society against another section, portraying them as high and low.

This Vedic system is a classification of society by skill and labour, but opponents interpret it as the division of society into higher and lower classes, and this is the root cause of cultural differences among castes and the conflict between the high and low of different classes and castes. Classification is not for discrimination but for the proper function of the system. Even division of society is not for discrimination and separation, but for the maintenance of the system; there is a possibility that antagonists may interpret division as discrimination, leading to hate between them in the system. However, this is against the spirit of the Vedic organic concept of society, for which everything is related to everything for their existence and function in the organic system.

II. Different Perspectives of Evaluating High and Low Classes

While considering the issue of high and low in the classes, one cannot forget the different perspectives in viewing the classes.

From the perspective of economics and finance, Vaiśyas are at the top of the four. From the ruling and political power Kṣatriyas, from the freedom from following Dharma the Śūdras, and from following Dharma as the life-principle, the Brāhmaṇas are at the top of the list of the four-fold division of society. In this parallel system, all are at the top in their respective excellence. The holistic organic concept of society for which dharma (Ṛta) is at the top of all social systems, the holistic body of the Pūruṣa as described in the class-system of Pūruṣa-sūkta of the Vedas, is the most scientific system.

The caste system has its beauty in Indian culture. It unites families with different relationships, such as marriage, within the same caste. It protects the weak from harm outside the caste and prevents caste members in society from conversion. The class system concerns the distribution and respect of labour, while castes are an interdependent cultural concept. For discrimination, the invaders and some antagonists created hate among the castes as higher and lower for the exploitation and capturing the traditional business of the so-called lower castes by isolating them so that they can exploit and convert them easily. In Indian society, persons of all castes are free to choose their jobs and businesses, and accordingly, they belong to the class of their expertise. Opponents criticize this concept as a basis for exploiting the lower classes. If we compare with foreign traditions, we find that Hindu society inflicted much less exploitation than the invaders. A free-market economy is more feasible in the caste system than in socialism and other ideologies. Hindu society will be the strongest in all respects of power, politics, and economy if there is no discrimination and hate for each other (Samyaṅchaḥ savratā bhūtvā vācham vadata bhadrayā (Atharvaveda 3/30/3)). It means we should be equally dynamic, perform our duties equally, be equal in knowledge and rules, and speak for mutual welfare.

It is a truism that we do not take a bath every time we touch our feet. Do we take a bath after touching our feet? In Hindu tradition, the feet are worshipped (charaṇapūjā), not the head or the hands. Comparing one part of the body to the other is just a wrong gesture, an imposition of the evil design of the antagonists to lower the great tradition for satisfying their own phobia against the holistic concept of Vedic society.

Actually, through language games, the antagonists try to hide their inhuman, hateful passions because they are not always conscious of the relation between the mouth and the feet in every part of living. The unity and conformity of a man to his own several parts do not have any sense of touchability. The organic theory of life connects all the units of life and society as linked and equally vulnerable. No person in this view is the lowest, and no work is inferior to another. It believes in the philosophy "work is worship." In an organic system, parts of the dynamic society are important, and they function together to improve life on Earth.

The four pillars of Indian culture are not based on any discrimination between high and low, but on an organic concept in which each pillar rests on the others in a holistic system. It is only due to antagonists who, due to hate of the nicely managed economy and the high importance of the service (śrama) system of Indian culture, propagated discrimination to weaken the society by dividing it into higher and lower. So far as the Vedas, Upaniṣads, śāstras, and Purāṇas are concerned, they hold that "work is worship." The society will not survive without the śūdra class having expertise in the different services required by society. All business and services in the śāstras were distributed to all classes except Brāhmaṇas, who, for survival, kept themselves dependent on begging and receiving donations from other classes. Only after the invader's rule did the fear of economic protection enter deep into the very structure of Indian society. Consequently, people of all social classes, without discrimination based on gender, were strongly inclined toward paying services. Now, all are servants because the persons of all classes willingly serve for payment. Those who are not in service engage in business irrespective of their caste. We differentiate services and businesses

by grade. Bur service is service, and so is business, and persons of all castes belong to these categories. Army people are also servants. They protect the nation's sovereignty from invaders in exchange for payment. Still, there are virtuous persons (sadāchārī) who are devoted to learning, giving proper guidance to society without any payment, and self-sacrificing for the uplifting of society. They are Brāhmaṇa despite birth in any caste.

So far as the beauty of Manusmṛti is concerned, it has devoted great portions of it to establishing moral rules, penalties, and punishments to prevent classes from breaking the moral laws of society. Manusmṛti is more focused on preventing Brāhmaṇas from falling to the class of Śūdras and on ensuring that Śūdras can rise to the class of Brāhmaṇas. This way, he respects changes in his perception of a dynamic society.

III. Are Values and Morality Means for Freedom of the Soul from Phenomenal Captives?

Sears and Sages believe life is a process, and this process continues not because of karma but because of the fruits or consequences of karma. They believe that human persons cannot survive even for a moment without karma. They do effortful actions that result in good or bad fruits and accordingly get heaven, and hell, and the process of birth and death continues, but the purpose of life is to get freedom from the chaining of birth and death. Good actions are also of two types: the first type of good action is that by the force of which one, after death, enjoys heaven. Such actions that result in good or merit are the cause of bondage, like evil actions; enjoying heaven, and after cessation of the fruits earned in earlier life, they fall to birth, and the process continues.

Second, there are virtuous duties that make one free from ignorance. Such duties/actions that are capable of affirming the soul are also of two types, as mentioned in all Śāstras.

i. Freedom from innate debts (Ṛṇa)

It belongs to the cause of our birth. In Sanātana dharma, birth is not only a biological event but also a cultural concept. Why are we born? We are born because we failed to pay off the inborn debts (Ṛṇa) in earlier life. This birth is for paying off the debts we incurred in our earlier lives. Had they been paid off in the earlier life, there would have been no birth. By freeing ourselves from the process of birth and death, we get freedom from the worldly process.

ii. Freedom from all categories of desires (Pūruṣārthas)

Puruṣārtha is the gradual satiation of all our four categories of desires (Artha, Kāma, Dharma, and Mokṣa). There is karma because desires are the cause of the incentive to our duties. If we satiate the desires belonging to wealth and prosperity, sensual and family (Kāma), and the welfare of others by donations, alms giving, and generosity (dharma), we transform them to their respective puruṣārtha. Puruṣārtha means freedom from the desires through virtuous actions and welfare duties; the desires through duty are exchanged with human values, and in case the category of desires is satiated, one achieves the puruṣārtha of that category. The desires of wealth, when satiated, become artha puruṣārtha, that is, freedom from the desires of wealth, and similarly is the case with Kāma and dharma- puruṣārthas. Lastly, after renouncing or cessation of all sorts of desires, we get freedom from the desire of Mokṣa (Mokṣa-puruṣārtha). Satiation of desires controls the flow of all three Guṇas and leads to a virtuous state that frees the soul from the phenomenal world.

Puruṣārtha is the system of values. Artha, kāma, dharma, and mokṣa are values because the person sublimates their desires to sāttvika(virtuous) and gets an incentive from those virtuous desires; they perform the duties in a manner to satiate them. They satiate their desires of Artha and kāma in the household stage, and the desires of dharma in the Wanderer's stage of life, and thus gradually make them Puruṣārthas. When artha, kama, and dharma become Puruṣārthas, and the desires regarding them are no longer disturbing to them. After satiating

desires for Artha, Kāma, and Dharma, they satiate the last category of desires and attain freedom from all categories of desires, that is, Parama-puruṣārtha.

Scholars often ask why a person should follow all four categories of puruṣārtha in a sequence. What is the objection there if a person in the present materialistic time follows only two that are, artha and kāma- puruṣārthas? If a person adopts the way of renunciation, he can, by following the practices of renunciation, get the liberation (Mokṣa or Parama- puruṣārtha) accomplished. Logically, there is no need for him to follow other puruṣārthas. For example, Śankarāchārya accomplished sanyāsa in his childhood and did great works for the welfare of all. They say Mokṣa- puruṣārtha for today's time is irrelevant. Our response to them is that if one wants to live a materialistic life, the desires of Artha and kāma are only conducive to them. If one adopts Sanyāsāśrama, he has nothing to do with desires concerning Artha, Kāma, and Dharma for the accomplishment of mokṣa. Manusmṛti has also raised these questions in the verse "dharmārthāvuchyate śreyaḥ kāmārthau dharama eva cha. Artha eveha vā śreyastrivarga iti tu sthitaḥ, Manusmṛti 2/224." According to Manu, some Achāryas accept Dharma and Artha for welfare, some accept Kāma and Artha, and some accept Artha as the only Puruṣārtha. But the knower of puruṣārthas accepts three categories (trivarga) for householders: Artha, Kāma, and Dharma. For a renunciate, Mokṣa is the only puruṣārtha.

We may argue against the materialists' position. Do they succeed in satisfying their desires of wealth, prosperity, and sex even in a hundred years of their long life? The answer is negative. The more they enjoy, the more the fire of desires multiplies, and they fail to satiate any of the wealth and sex categories of desires till their death. The matter is not to enjoy the desires but to satiate them, and that leads them to freedom from these two categories of desires.

Does a Sanyāsi get his desire of Mokṣa realized without knowing the hollowness of the desires of Artha, kāma, and dharma? The answer is "no." There is a possibility for a Sanyāsi to return to a household who renounces without knowing the hollowness of the desires of Artha and kāma. So far as exceptions like Śankarāchārya are concerned, he realized in his childhood the hollowness of worldly desires and then renounced them knowingly. He was a born Sanyāsī.

The house-holders who, by their duties, satiate their desires of artha and Kāma in the household, turn forward to satiate the desires of Dharma, and finally move to satiate the desires of freedom from all four desires. Thus, Artha-puruṣārtha, Kāma-puruṣārtha, Dharma-puruṣārtha, and in sequence freedom from all desires (parama-puruṣārtha) is accomplished.

IV. Traditions of Two Ways of Living

Humans live two contrasting ways of life, and on that basis, they are divided into two categories of people with contrasting perspectives. People in the first category follow others' experiences, such as a book, a prophet, a priest, a motivator, and the like. Unlike it, the other small category of people live their own experiences. It believes life is an integral system of duties, responsibilities, and living values. These perspectives shape our philosophies of life, especially regarding ethical conduct, which gives meaning to one's life on earth.

i. Values we just follow

The first of the two is to live the other's experiences laid down in the great books, as we find in religions, some religious sects, followers of prophetic religions, and great religious persons as well. Here, we receive values from other agencies and are only there to follow them. They do not need to exercise their own experiences independently to shape values for human practices of welfare, because they are not drawn to us from other agencies, divine or human. Values, duties, and destination, fate, and finding (may be heaven or alike) are predetermined; all come from outside and are fixed forever as God's word in the revealed books, and that is only the way of life of the followers. Humans have no option but to follow them if they want to safeguard their fate. However, to us, it is not only imitative but also makes followers

captives of it, blocking their own experiences, their own minds, and anything except following. They believe it is a terror against God if they exercise their own will or even another book or tradition. Thus, they confuse the openness of their creativity and confine their freedom to follow the racial pride of the book only as a religious value. About their own experience, they suffer from fear of falling from their sectarian bigotry. The highest purpose of life is to live the way fixed by the book. The Book for followers is the divine argument and justification about duties, commands, and values. Alternatives, freedom, and responsibility for duties solely descend from the top down to the doers, which makes morality a mess.

ii. Values we live by our own experience

Just opposed to the earlier perspective of duties and responsibilities of our any or all conduct to others are moral if they are exchanged with welfare and other human values. It is a living of virtuous duties (sadācaraṇa) in which all the faculties of knowing, willing, and feeling, human emotions and passions, their desires and intentions are not overlooked but are exchanged from values through duties/actions and responsibility to them. We perceive that theories of ethics and morality define morality in terms of humans' individual and collective desires and needs, and accordingly evaluate humans as passionate, rational, or a combination of both. Some of them are antagonistic to any moral disciplining because they think it is against the freedom of their life. The Indian ethical system values humans as ethical beings. Accordingly, the purpose of a human's life in Indian Ethics is not to attain God or his heaven, divinity, pleasure, social prosperity, name and fame, but to live a life free from all determinations and treat humans with reverence without any discrimination. One is born to pay off the debts incurred in a previous life, and thus, freedom from inborn debts is freedom from the cycle of birth and death. This paying off debt is possible only by performing duties and responsibilities. By performing duties to oneself and to all others, he gets the purity of heart and mind and achieves freedom from the debts and hence from the cycle of birth and death.

There are opponents of the view of life as a birth-death cycle; they see death as freedom. Some believe in the divinity of all in the universe, and only living with this perspective can lead them to freedom; and again, some want to live their desires and manage them morally well to achieve freedom as the culmination of their moral cultivation. Since all three categories of people want liberation as the summum bonum of their lives, they give the highest importance to moral living (Sadācāra), a virtuous life, a life of values that cultivate them to attain freedom. Virtuous duties (Sadācāracaṇa) should be practiced only if one is well aware of one's nature and the goal of life. Let us discuss the moral actions/duties in view of these perspectives.

V. Perspectives of Indian Ethical Systems

We observe three main perspectives in Indian ethical systems.

i. That is favored by materialists (lokāyata) who are usually taken to believe that eating, drinking, and being merry are the moral goals of life.

ii. That is sanātanī that considers the life in humans, elements of nature, and nature itself as divine and is concerned with venerable conduct to all, to oneself, and to all others as well.

iii. It is an incredible philosophy of ethics that envisions that human desires can be cultivated, exchanged for values through duties and responsibilities, and this scheme of living with the desires can lead to liberation.

1. First Perspective: Ethics of Materialistic Philosophy of Chārvāka

From the history of the heterodox system of Cārvāka, it appears to be a materialist system. Mādhvācāryra, the first author of the history of Indian philosophy (Sarvadarśana sangrahaḥ), presents the system that accepts only perception as a valid source of knowledge and 'Eat, drink, and be merry' as the hedonistic goal of life. The other version of Cārvāka materialism

is found in Jayarāśi Bhaṭṭa, who declares himself the best disciple of Vṛhaspati, the system's founder.

At first glance, it seems Jayarasi is not interested in offering ethical ideas, but upon closer inspection, we find remarkable statements that are very clear about his ethical vision. By the way, it indicates a fact that if a system accepts only four elements and denies even the fifth, that is, sky, against what Bṛhaspati, the founder of the Indian materialism, tradition propounds, there is a reasonable ground before the Cārvāka to deny the values that cannot be created by association of material elements. This also indicates that, since the values are not such as are proved by reasoning and sources of knowledge, he refutes the theories of different schools of Indian philosophy that apply reasoning and analysis to prove the objects as empirical or transcendental, because they are not concerned with ethical vision.

To evaluate his ethical vision, one must examine the beginning of the first chapter and the end of the last chapter of *Tattvopaplavasinhaḥ*, the only authentic book available on the system. If life is lively to be lived, then these conflicting reasoning and argumentation do not yield any fruit of interest either in this life (loka) or in the heaven (svarga, etc., transcendental life if any) as well. Life moves naturally according to its laws and conduct, and any amount of analysis, argumentation, and reasoning to prove or disprove beyond the settled conduct makes the truth and value complicated and confused, rather than making them clear, and thus the refutation. He suggests following the path of wisdom regarding conduct for the welfare of humanity (laukikomārgo anusartavyaḥ, *Tattvopaplavasinhaḥ*, Grantha Prakaraṇ pratijñā, p. 1). He again refers to a traditional saying, "loka vyavahāram prati sadṛśau bāla panditau," meaning thereby that the treatment of both the child and the wise about worldly practices or conduct is similar. He concludes his treatise with the sentence having a deep meaning, 'Tadevam upapluteṣveva tattveṣu avicārita ramaṇīyāḥ sarvevyavahārā ghaṭanta iti (Jayarāśi, 1987, p.115). Until all principles, theories, and ideas are proved futile on analysis and observation, all conduct is gratifying; all conduct seems to be charming only until the arguments are not analyzed and interpreted by reasoning. The ethics of "Eat, drink, and be merry," as given by Mādhavācārya, is interpreted as a very crude form of hedonistic theory. However, Jayarāśi nowhere talks about such an ethics. According to him, the ethics of following conduct practiced without analysis, observation, and interpretation create confusion. Therefore, one follows the path well settled in worldly practices (Laukiko mārgo anusartavaḥ). Thus, it can be concluded that to make this world a respectable place worth living a hundred springs merrily is the basic ethics of the Cārvāka system.

In brief, both ethical perspectives belong to the same soil. The former, that is, the spiritualistic view, believes in the management of desires for transformation, exchangeable for values, and, lastly, in getting freedom from all categories of desires. In contrast, there is no place for getting rid of desires in the materialistic system of Cārvāka. Duty for Cārvāka is nothing more than the follow-up of the conventional reason (lokavyavahāra) that the people perceive, practice, and evaluate as good and bad. Morality is to live, and the logical enquiry is meant only for removing the doubts, if any. Logical arguments and reasoning cannot make some action a moral duty for some and an immoral practice for others. Regarding the course of worldly life or the conduct current among the people, Jayarāśi in the second line of his book *Tattvopaplavsinhaḥ* says "laukiko mārgo anusartavyaḥ" (Jayarāśi, 1987, p. 1). The children and the wise do the same with worldly things. Even the wise cannot undo the practice of the way of world-humanity (laukika Mārga) that has become one's own mind. While the former perspective clearly accepts the duty as a venerable conduct toward the outside world and toward the individual, as the inborn debt to be paid off with a moral principle to conduct others as you would like others to conduct you.

Indian Materialism, with the philosophical reflections of K. Damodaran, Manavendra Nath Rai, and Devi Prasad Chattopadhyaya, has developed to the point that it enables them to think that great spiritual characters may emerge from within the conflicting materialistic-hedonistic situations and lead humanity.

2. Perspective of Divinity

The metaphysical background of the Vedas perceives everything, inside and outside, as spirit, as we find in the Nāsadīya Śūkta and the Puruṣa-Śūkta. For all practical purposes, the Vedas accept the nature of everyone as divine, as we find in all Śūktas concerning the deities. This perspective views morality as treating everything in the cosmos as divine. It is not like Kant's kingdom of ends. Divinity here means the "principle of forces that grace welfare" and not the dry rationality. Our conduct to the five elements of nature (sky, fire, air, water, earth), luminaries, and different communities like human, wild, aquatic, aerial, etc., and nature as a whole must be venerable. If our goal is to realize spirit in our lifetime, our conduct toward all others must be divine. This venerable conduct to all is not possible if volitions and passionate desires are incentives to our duties. *T*he basic perspective of the divinity of all beings is the rationale for a venerable conduct to all inside and outside, sentient and insentient beings. All are divine because of their potency to act or to grant our desires, needs, and welfare. My respect for a tree means I should use the fruits it gives me in return for the services I render to it. For example, we should use the fruits, stems, leaves, flowers, etc., that the tree gives us in response to our service and care for it, and thus, should not cause its extinction. A venerable perspective to others in conducting oneself with them ranks an action as a moral duty. Rationality is not overlooked, but rationality, in the field of morality, is not allowed to divide and separate the rational from others in respecting the existence value of others and conducting themselves with respect. As per divine perspective, the progress of rationality is to be judged by our conduct for the welfare of others and not from our possession of riches and civilizational achievements.

No ethical theory that divides us in our existence, values, and conduct towards our surroundings can be a code of sound human life. Modern scientists have concluded that even the things in nature and nature itself respond to and react to our duties to them, both qualitatively and quantitatively. *Kālidāsa*, an ancient Sanskrit poet, has, through similes, beautifully pictured nature's response to our care and duties toward it. To show how the pets, wild, aquatic, avian, trees, plant communities, ocean, mountains, and nature as a whole respond in proportion to our conduct to them, is the basic music of similes of Kālidāsa (Tiwari, 2020, pp. 2-19). Nature does not have only existence value, but is also divine. It is the divinity of nature that it gifts plenty to human existence and needs for its nourishment, maintenance, development, and progress; our divinity lies in taking care of them through our services or conduct to them. Venerable conduct is, in fact, not only mutual fostering but may also lead to the highest stage of one's individual and social divinity (Ibid.). However, one is free to conduct venerably or otherwise, that is evaluated as moral only if it is venerable; if otherwise, it is immoral or vile.

3. Spiritual Perspective

Based on the metaphysical background of the idea that the entire globe is a family (vasudhaiva kutumkam), as found in popular Purāṇas like the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, a conduct is moral if one does only what he/she would have others do to him/her. Negatively, do not conduct that you do not want others to conduct to you (Ātmanaḥ pratikulāni pareṣām na samācaret, Padma purāṇ, sṛṣṭi parva, 19/357). Here, the use of the term "ātmanaḥ" restricts the ego and the consequent hedonistic desires that are popularly taken as the cause of incentive to an action.

Soul is consciousness, and the same is knowledge, the highest value that everyone loves and nobody hates or thinks to hurt the self. What is dear to you is dear to others as well. Thus, morally, a conduct is perceived in a way you love to do to others and like others to do to you.

Foreign invaders do not have anything like morality except for ruling for despoilment. The looters cannot even think of respectable conduct toward the people they invade. They behave like demons, inflict cruelty on innocent children, women, and men, and do all sorts of wild things. Their wildness is not only their weapons but also their way of life. They aim to destroy the culture of the country; they are destroyers of values and planned well to terrorize by their rule of violence and exploitation. Even if they idealize an imperialistic God as the

protector of only their race and enforce a blind faith in that God, they made people's minds toxic with blind faith. They spread the wrong message to kill the welfare-minded people, declaring them disbelievers and enemies of the way of the God of their race. They are arrogant enough to force their philosophy on people, that their God does not tolerate a disbeliever.

Despite all evils from the aggressive invaders and insertion of their faith in the interpretation of Indian classical texts, the foundation of the Hindu view that all are the same family provided light about their way in two ways: i. the welfare of others is the dharma /duty, and therefore, let us perform our own duties, and ii. The law of karma, evil begets evil, and the good begets good; as you sow, so shall you reap. We not only accept the invaders but celebrate them despite their racial hate toward us with a positive hope that our goodness to them will slowly change them, and that will be our moral victory against the enemy of humanity. However, the vulnerability of conduct or duty to all human and other communalities in nature is placed so high by the Vedas, *Upaniṣads*, *Gītā*, and other classical texts that made us realize and encourage the action we perform effortfully to get our freedom of life and life principle of welfare "do the duty without the want of fruits." In India, one may be a materialist, a theologian, or a spiritualist; he/she may differ on several issues, but his/her difference will reflect Indian-ness, and that is due to the ethical orientation inhering in his/her very deep structure and the society, or in following the *Sanātana* way of living a good life. Separatism and communal conflicts in India will not succeed if all citizens give their best by exercising their democratic minds for the only goal: S*varāja* and the pride of the nation. Values and morality are the energy that enable us to accept and celebrate change without altering our spirit of duty to the welfare of the world and humanity.

VI. Importance of Values and Morality in Advaita-Vedanta

In a discussion on values and morality, the philosophy of Advaita-Vedanta stands out. Many foreign and Indian scholars often view Advaita Vedanta as Indian philosophy and as a spiritual philosophy for the realization of the spirit, the non-dual Reality. They hold that Advaita Vedanta is the metaphysics of Brahman, which can be realized through knowledge. It is considered a philosophy of renunciation of the world and worldly phenomena that are the outcome of ignorance (Māyā). They observe that it overlooks or gives little importance to the morality practiced in day-to-day life in the journey toward the realization of Brahman. Māyā is ontologically taken as an indescribable concept. If we perceive Advaita Vedanta from the perspective of this worldliness, the morality in Advaita Vedanta ranks better than any system. Generally, we have a sense that "Māyā rules in the kingdom of Māyā," but in fact, the teachings of Vedanta, as we find in the dialogue of Yājñyavalkya and Gārgī in Brh.up.3/8/9-10, state that "the reign of Brahman (*satyam, śivam and sundaram that is, satyam jñanamānandam*) in the kingdom of Māyā." The sun, the moon, the lustrous world, the earth, are present in its reign, well operated, and so are the blinking of eyes, auspicious moments, day-night, fort night, month, season, monsoons, and years, in its reign; the rivers flowing towards East and West from the Himalayas follow the direction they flow.

Humans praise a donor or giver; the deities follow the sacrificatorio (yajamāna, the person who performs sacrifices); and the forefathers follow the offerings made to them by their progeny. In brief, all have their own existence, different natures, and perform functions of their own without any interruption or abuse. Those who perform sacrifice, offer oblation into the sacred fire, and do a thousand years of penance without knowing this truth in this life, get rebirth as a miser. The meaning of the whole above passage is that 'the reign of Brahman is the reign of Svarāja' and, therefore, it is a great message to treat others venerably as the same spirit that he/she is. In this sense, the ethical concept of inborn debts, puruṣārthas, and the institutions of life (Āśramas) are all highly relevant for the Advaita system of non-duality.

The concept of Māyā allows for its removal, thereby paving the way for the realization of non-dual Brahman. Thus, there is Māyā and, therefore, there is Dharma, Satya, and their

righteous learners. Though Māyāvāda is like Arthavāda, allegory, they aim to indicate the Truth easily, so that children and the ignorant are cultivated with the view that persons can realize the Truth through the purity of heart, which one gets through moral cultivation. From the utility point of view, if one knows that the phenomenal world and life (Jīvatva) are Māyā, the person cannot be perturbed and distracted from the fear of birth, old age, and death. The world of Māyā is the world of human conduct; all concepts from an ethical point of view are relevant if all is Spirit (Brahman). We perceive all with the venerable sense and conduct to them with respect. Thus, the ethics of Māyā is the ethics of loka, and that is for the cultural perfection. This is why Advaita Vedanta is the way to spiritual freedom, the freedom of mind from the captives of Māyā. Śankarāchārya philosophizes the theory of Advaita with a sense of moral cultivation (sanskāra) and freedom from Māyā. The life journey starts from Māyā, removes it through the moral process, and realizes the true self or Brahman; thus, in Advaita Vedanta, Māyā is a concept of the progress of the virtuous (sāttvika) worldly phenomena, and hence its moral significance cannot be denied.

It is often misunderstood that for the Advaita Vedantic concept of world, everything, even individual life (jīvatva) in the sense of real, is illusory, and to treat illusion as spirit is also an illusion, and hence, there is no redemption. We think the philosophy of Advaita is well perceived as the way of a person's realization of the soul.

It is from the Advaitic perspective that dualistic and non-dualistic systems gain their true import, signifying the progressiveness of Indian culture, global consciousness, and the importance of history. It is through Māyā that Art, music, physical science, and entertainment are all respected as part of education. The unbroken continuity of the teachings of the Veda, Gṛhasūtras, Brahmasūtras, smṛtis, purāṇas, and the whole of Indian tradition can be well observed from the Advaitic perspective. Our spirit is not limited to material and divine worlds, and it is true that despite divagation, roaming in different states of awaking, sleeping, and deep sleep due to the limitations of senses and mind, the spirituality of Advaita Vedanta claims that our spirit transcends them all and reaches its blissful nature in deep sleep. Examples and instances of the snake-and-rope, silver-and-shell illusions are meant to help us understand the truth of phenomenal reality through the methods of imposition (adhyāropa) and exclusion (apavāda).

Māyā is a ground of different concepts in the system of Advaita Vedanta. If the concept of Māyā is understood in a moral sense, it has unparalleled moral significance. The world of Māyā is the world of living mercifulness, benevolence, and vulnerability to others by controlling ill conduct, purification of the heart by moral conduct, practicing restraints and observations (yamas and niyama). It is so charming that one prepares to make the earth a heaven, to attain heaven, and even to undergo a rebirth.

In this sense, humans are, according to Vedanta, perceived as more privileged than the deities. Dharma, karma, yoga, vinoda, love, affection, obligation, and all the physical, mental, and spiritual values (adhyātma) that make this life happy and enriched are the charms of the kingdom of Māyā only. It may be that, after enjoying them one by one, realizing their hollowness, he transcends Māyā and reaches the stage of realizing his true nature.

Birth, youth, old age, and death, day-to-day happenings associated with them, and all changing and mortal phenomena are Māyā. This understanding does not make one shattered (vichalita) by those happenings. Praise or explanatory language (arthavada), allegories, and myths may be false. However, mothers use them to tell stories to children so that, after maturity, the child will be fit not only to suffer them happily but also to perceive/experience the truth. The freedom of Māyā is the freedom to perform moral duties for the sake of cultural perfection.

From a utilitarian or a consequentialist point of view, the concept of Māyā in Vedantic philosophy serves an ethical purpose. When we find that our neighbor, by corrupt means, has collected so much money, luxuries, respect in society, we may feel belittled and hopeless for our qualifications, hard labour, all good living, and conduct to others. But the moment it comes to our mind that all that the corrupt persons have possessed is Māyā, destroyable and

bound to result in bad consequences for them in the near future, we feel great satisfaction, a positive attitude, and pride in living honestly. In brief, ethical duties, values, and conduct are grounded in the duality. To conduct oneself with a sense of identity or non-duality is ideal; thus, the concept of Māyā is ethically important in the world of duality.

Niṣkāma-karma or Karma-yoga is an unparalleled ethical concept propounded by *Gītā*. Very often, scholars confuse *Gītā*'s concept of duty for welfare's sake with Immanuel Kant's 'Duty for duty's sake' and evaluate the latter as similar to *Gītā*'s concept of duty. According to the *Gītā*, duty is free from the attachments of fruits and ego (Anāsakta-karma). It is not the renunciation of karma but renunciation in karma. It works like the fried seed that cannot germinate despite the presence of all material conditions like water, minerals, soil, and the Sun. Such actions as disinterested are free from interest and effort; they are performed by the agent always for the welfare of humanity, but they cannot yield any fruit, and since the fruits are the cause of the process of birth and death, the process stops, and one gets liberated.

VII. Meaning of the moral sentences

The Vedas and Śāstras are Karma-Śāstras, and that is what we popularly understand by the term "Dharma- Śāstras." Since performing the duties for welfare of the humanity (loka) is dharma and, since it accept verb as the central word in an expression, the orientation of language is explained by the tradition as action/ duty oriented and the presence of the three factors namely sādhya(the purpose, aim or goal that has to be achieved that is duty/work the agent does), sādhana (the means or instruments through which the sādhya is achieved) that is, doer, agent, etc) and itikartavyatā(the accomplishment of the action or the completion of the action) are well decided as the criterion of meaningfulness of the language. Though factors like correspondence, coherence, and pragmatic factors are also accepted as criteria of verification and meaning, they are also given importance for making a sentence understandable to those who accept language as reference, designation, and representation, and meaning as the thing referred to, designated, and represented. Indian tradition accepts language as an expression of action/duty (sādhya). It is expressed by the sentence/word (sādhana), and finally, we find the duty/action expressed by the language is accomplished, that is, itikartavyatā. Thus, the meaningfulness of the moral sentences cannot be denied. They are justified by the expression of the Śāstras, the cause of incentive to duties, and their utility for our cultivation and welfare. This is such a truth that, by negating it, even the references cannot achieve completeness and cannot refer to the referent. For example, if I say "dog," it has a general meaning that cannot be verified but if I say dog is there, dog exists, dog barks, and the like, they convey a complete meaning, and that is because of the use of verbs 'is', exists, barks, etc.). If language is action-oriented. Life is a process; human values and morality are meaningful in life and discourse (2015, pp. 93-106).

A duty is a moral duty performed to others for the welfare of those to whom we perform. Isolated from the purpose of welfare, no duty is moral. Exchangeability is the factor that causes value. Desires, through actions/duties toward others, are exchanged for values, that is, welfare in general. A man is not a man if isolated from such values as sacrifice (Tyāga), austerity (tapa), compassion (dāya), charity (dāna), and duty to others (dharma). Following up on essential values is a must for continuing as a member of a family, society, and nation. Similarly, there are some natural values (naisargika) like care, love, kindness, co-operation, fraternity, respect, etc., without which humans will not be members of a moral society.

Indian Culture is not anthropocentric but holistic in its spirit. It believes in a very comprehensive system of values. Unlike other traditions, yamas (truth speaking, non-violence, celibacy, non-stealing, non-possession or sacrifice) and niyamas, purity (śaucha), contentment (santoṣa), penance (tapa), learning spirituality (svādhyāya), and surrender to the divine (Īśvara-praṇidhāna) are basic values in Indian culture. Moral values are given utmost importance in the *Gītā*, Jainism, Pātañjala yoga, and Gandhi's teachings, which are relevant to the cultivation of character, making humans virtuous, and are foundational to a good society.

They place great value on a system of moral cultivation in Indian culture, aiming to prepare humans for the welfare of the world and of humanity. Let us observe the following difference of *Gītā*'s concept of duty from that of Kant's categorical imperatives.

VIII. Differences of *Gītā*'s Concept of Duty for Welfare's Sake and Kant's Duty for Duty's Sake.

1. Unlike Kant, *Gītā* analyses Reason (buddhi) as Tāmasika, Rājasika, and Sāttvika. No reason and imperatives in the field of morality are acceptable if they are not infused with welfare (*Gītā* 18/29-31). The duties have their standard, that is, Sāttvika- buddhi (virtuous reason) and virtuous duty (Sāttvika karma), which is a duty for the welfare of others, and so is the virtuous desire (Sāttvika-Ichhā), which is the cause of the incentive to duties for welfare. For *Gītā*, the reason that acts for duties is the reason not in-itself but for welfare. A duty is a duty not because it is a rational imperative but because of welfare (*Gītā*, 18/5-17). The ideal for tāmasika and rājasika- rationality is Sāttvika -buddhi (virtuous reason) that is not dry but always infused with goodness and welfare. In Kant, reason is reason without a difference of good reason and bad reason. At the same time, *Gītā* analyses reason into Tāmasika, Rājasika, and Sāttvika (virtuous) and accepts the last category of reason as the incentive to moral duties. For example, if we donate a coin to a needy person, throwing it in such a way that his head is injured and he needs to consult a doctor for primary treatment, the reason for donating is Tāmasika. If a person donates a coin to people in need and advertises it to enhance his image in others, or if he donates to others, then, in his own time, others will help him; it is Rājasika Buddhi. However, if one donates the coin with the attitude of doing welfare, it is Sāttvika Buddhi (virtuous reason). Sāttvika Buddhi (virtuous Reason) is the ideal of other sorts of Reason. Such an analysis of reason is not present in the mind of Kant when he gives his theory of the categorical imperative.

2. Kant argued against virtue ethics. In his deontological theory, the duty is decided based on reason, that is, they are categorical imperatives, and hence there is no place for virtues for rational imperatives. A drinker, while drinking, can also say that 'drinking is bad, therefore do not drink'. It is immoral if the fruits imported by Kant from a foreign country are eaten up by the sailors whose lives were risked on the ship in a month-long storm at sea, and who somehow survived on the fruits booked by Kant from an Asian country. Nevertheless, from the Indian perspective of welfare, such duties as are immoral in Kant are not so in *Gītā*. There is a category of values, but there is no place for virtues in his deontological scheme of categories.

3. In the Kantian theory of duty as categorical imperative, the rationality (reason is the highest good but in the *Gītā*, a man is rational because he performs duties for the welfare. Thus, welfare is the highest good for Indian Ethics. No Reason is justified rationally if it overlooks welfare, and no human is an ethical being if he does not cultivate himself morally for doing the welfare (lokahita) of the world community (Loka-sangraha). It is just dry categorical imperatives that may create an unsolved moral dilemma. For example, truth-speaking and promise-keeping are categorical imperatives, and therefore moral. But we find conflicting moral duties in that case, and Kant has no option but to overlook the dilemma. He will support only that which is in accordance with his categorical imperative. Let us clarify Kant's position on 'speaking the truth' and keeping promises. In the Mahābhārata, the sage Kauśika's promise of speaking the truth led the robbers to kill the innocent traders who, to save their lives from them, were hiding in the sage's hermit. No truth is moral truth if it is not infused with welfare. Protecting the life of the innocents is a moral duty in comparison to speaking such a truth that harms and risks others' lives.

4. Unlike computational and artificial skills, including categorical imperatives, ethical conduct has humanitarian concern that requires cultural, social, individual aspirations, and moral cultivation of the desires to make them virtues. Kant has overlooked this aspect of human truth: the cultivation of desires to be exchangeable for other human values through

duties. He starts from the point that ethics is meant only for rational humans, but in Indian ethics, man is a moral being.

5. Kant confines the duties to a particular group of people who are aware of goodwill and the members of the kingdom of ends or rational beings. His theory of the kingdom of ends not only divides humanity but also overlooks the morality of those who are mixed with rationality and feelings; most of the time, they perform their duties/works to satisfy their feelings, emotions, and interests without knowing the difference between such actions as moral or immoral. They do their duties that are evaluated as good or bad by others. Are humans having the perception of the utility value of others, lacking rationality in what to do and not do for their good and the good of their children? According to Kantian imperatives, they should not put themselves as means, but rational imperatives are that they should treat others as ends. How? Is it possible without the moral cultivation of their rationality? Moral duty is for all those who are in the process of moral cultivation, and for those who have already cultivated their rationality. A theory of duty is a moral theory not for the theorist's only but for all whose reason may not be free from desires, interests, and emotions. I think a moral theory is given to those whose rationality is not dry, or who motivate their rationality with their virtuous emotions and passions, and only in such a situation can the duty be evaluated as moral, if otherwise immoral. As observed above, it is difficult to evaluate an action morally if the moral agent is not responsible for performing those moral duties. The responsibility belongs to the exchange of an action with some human values from the side of those to whom we perform the duty. Moral duty may be caused by compassion, sacrifice, welfare, care, and the like. Children do follow their parents and teachers not because it is their rational imperative but because of their innate debts, learning, practice, respect, welfare, etc.

6. A duty is our conduct to others and is exchanged with some human values like positivity, goodness, welfare, etc., and it is for that reason that it is moral. But in Kant's scheme of categorical imperatives, there is no exchange of conduct for values except logical universalization. It is just a practice of intellect with other rational humans, but, from an Indian perspective, unlike Kant's rational doers, agents are common people who live for the moral satisfaction of their desires across the four stages of life.

There is a similarity between the concept of truth as a criterion of moral duty in the Rāmāyaṇa and that of Kant. Rāma, the righteous king, gives utmost importance to truth as a moral value. For example, "keeping promise," "speaking Truth," and accepting truth as the criterion of deciding the actions as moral. However, there is a difference between the Rāmāyaṇa view of truth and that of Kant. In Rāmāyaṇa, truth is the truth of humanity (loka-bhāvanā), and the goal of truth as value is the welfare of the public and not a dry following of imperatives of *reason. Rā*ma is a righteous king because he sought the truth in values such as sacrifice, austerity, non-violence, and respect for others. His truth is the public's truth, grounded in traditional values. The will of the public is his will in deciding any righteous duty. For example, he accepted exile rather than the kingdom's throne to keep the promise he had given his dead father. In another instance, he sacrificed his own beloved wife and exiled her when she was pregnant. It is because of the truth that his wife, as per the will of the public of his kingdom, was not an ideal queen. He killed Śambūka while he was doing rigorous penance because his purpose of penance was to rule over the deities' world with this physical body, but to join heaven with a body is beyond imagination, impossible. Different from it, Kant accepts goodwill as dry rational will, and so are his categorical imperatives.

The more moral theories, the more confusion there will be about duty. The threat of religious terrorism and economic war is growing globally day by day. Consequently, the global imbalance has caused fear to think about a beautiful world that, at present, is on the verge of destruction. The need of the time is to assimilate Indian values and practices to cultivate a morally grounded life for peace and progress. In this sense, Indian values and morality are a universal appeal.

Bad actions are performed with effortful bad motives. They are not a duty for the welfare of others and can never be performed disinterestedly. Nobody, not even God, can forgive bad

actions because He does not interfere with the law of karma. A gets the fruits of his/her action, and not B; likewise, B gets the fruits of his/her action, and not A. God is 'just' only because he does not interfere in the law of karma. However, the beauty of moral actions is that if they are performed disinterestedly, that is, without interest and attachment to fruits, they can serve for the freedom from the circle of birth and death.

IX. Svarāja and Present Move for Developed India (Vikasit Bharata)

The concept of "Svarāja" played a significant role in the country's freedom from foreign rule and the formation of self-government. Inspired by Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played a vital role in the freedom movement. Patel's slogan "Svarāja hamāra janmasiddha adhikāra hai" is the slogan of each of the Indians in the freedom movement. Gandhi does not take Svarāja as political freedom alone, but as the freedom of a person from the problems of social and economic bondage. Svarāja is an ethical concept. It is the respect of self; for any duty or action or protection from obstacles, it is not dependency on any ideology, anybody, or anything except self (Ātma nirbhāratā). The Movement of Self-reliant India (Ātma nirbhara Bhārata) emphasizes the Nation's resourcefulness across all areas of progress and development. It is everybody's company; coordination and cooperation are the principles of the growth of everyone (Sabkā sātha sabkā vikāsa). It represents and serves as the ethics of individual and collective development, and provides a strong incentive to 'Vocal for the local', which is about value-based productivity of indigenous products and their conduct for the collective development of individuals and national strength. To value local is to value Svarāja. It meets global expectations and welcomes them enthusiastically. In our view, it is not only a political slogan but also a moral principle aimed at strengthening India, in line with its well-known image as a global charm.

Education is getting updated to meet the new challenges, and the courses for learning all sorts of disciplines, including AI, are introduced to promote the creativity of mind and the welfare of humanity as the goal, the highest truth and good of life. New challenges posed by the rise of AI can be faced not by deconstructing values and morality, but by properly understanding the spiritual purpose and conducting them venerably toward others. In this respect, Indian spiritual perception of values and morality, as reflected in texts such as the Vedas, Smrtis, the *Gita*, the *Epics* like the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Niti-granthas*, and contemporary philosophers like Vivekananda and M.K. Gandhi, is the best remedy against all sorts of evil forces prevailing at present. Their teachings guide the transformation of aggression into the harmony and peace needed for humanity's progress. The goal of the Physics, Mathematics, Ayurveda (medicinal science), Astro-science, and other disciplines of Sanātana is the welfare of the world-humanity. Welfare duties can be performed better if one gets the stage of Svarāja, a state that is the ideal of virtuous intellect and conduct.

Ātma nirbhara Bhārata is the ethics of Svarāja that believes in the moral cultivation to the extent of self-dependence, and thus, a ruler on his own self is like the self-ruled citizen. This is the ideal of the Indian democracy. Democratic Government is to help citizens cultivate democratic minds in the country. It advocates local products to achieve economic independence and political neutrality. It strengthens the policy of non-aligned countries to promote international peace, solidarity, and business, with awareness of the good of the nation, independently of any power bloc of states.

The Non-Aligned Movement is an international body of states that decided not to align with any bloc in the political and economic war. India is a member of NAM. Non-alignment is the mantra for resolving conflicts among citizens in a democracy. If our minds are not democratically cultured, there will be communal, religious, and economic terror in society and the country. Let the minds grow democratically to the stage of pride of Svarāja. Shivaji, a Svarājī, used to say, "Don't care for anything, even to risk one's own life. The concept of Ātma nirbhara Bhārata' is the way to the rule of Svarāja in an individual, society and country, a powerful state of consciousness to work for making oneself, society and the country free

from the ideological conflicts, mental tension, dependency on others for getting happiness, by getting rid of social poverty, ideological narrowness, administrative and economic problems and hence, more a moral concept.

Svarāja is literally self-governance, self-rule, and, philosophically, it is the freedom to live worthily by the rule of one's own wisdom, in a way that is not opposed to the rules of any governance. It is the backbone of democratically cultivated minds free from the captives of different ideologies. Thus, Svarāja is not only political but also the freedom of thought from the captivity of different foreign ideologies. It is a state of decolonized thoughts. According to it, the rule of the self is not the rule of an individual or a group of individuals based on the difference between the ruler and the ruled. Rather, it is the rule of all the citizens who love the spirit of the nation and the Bhārata-Bhūmi, and more than that, who love themselves. It is the realization that the same moral law works in the cosmos, in nature, and in human rules of virtuous (sāttvika) intellect. Nature does not rule over; so, in the cosmos, the rules of the self are the same as the rules of nature and environment, and thus there is no ruler–ruled distinction. For Svarāja, there is respect for all. The individual feels the ruler of his own. In welfare duties, the laws of reason at all levels of human existence are Svarāja, and education helps us cultivate, realize, and practice Svarāja. It does not negate a state; it talks about a state governed by those trained in Svarāja. It is the affirmation of the existence of the 'human consciousness is freedom from all determinations and disinterested action/duty (Niṣkāma karma).

If the Sanskāra of human values and morality is instilled in young ones by parents, society, and educational institutions into the very deep structure of their minds, they will learn more and more knowledge to enable themselves to perform all duties naturally with a sense of welfare. Welfare is the character of the broad-minded persons who perceive their goodness in the good for others. If Knowledge is dry and devoid of value-based refinement, it is of no use. In Indian tradition, knowledge signifies the cultivation of human consciousness for the welfare of oneself and others. An education system must therefore be developed in a way that strengthens the character of non-discrimination and welfare among youths. The ethical purpose of all forms of education is to ensure that social welfare is inherently embedded within an individual's welfare. When our intellect becomes free from the web of prejudices related to high and low, rich and poor, caste and sect, as well as from the insecurity of the future arising out of economic, social, and political uncertainties, a healthy, creative intellectual capacity and efficiency will flourish. Only then can the dream of a prosperous Svarāja be realized.

Ethical hedonism in the West underwent a significant shift toward utilitarianism in its practices. However, they have developed their utilitarian theory to the extent of ethical relativism for no universal moral truth that applies to all people and time, rather it is relative to a particular individual or a community in a particular time and place that has faith in that belief, and that may be morally wrong in another individual or community in the same time. For us, morality is not relative to individual practice; it is our natural conduct to others; the welfare of the agent and the others to whom it is practiced; it is not restricted to an individual's argument or the belief of a society, but moral for humanity for all time. Morality that differentiates the individual and society on the basis of their own relative arguments is no longer moral. If theories such as ethical relativism may be moral to the extent of defending their immoral interests as moral against others, there is no value in such ethics for humanity as a whole.

No ethical theory is well settled if it overlooks the welfare practices followed by people whose values and respectable conduct toward all others (loka) are primary criteria for an ethically cultured person, a society, and a nation. The loka does not run by any moral abuses like dishonesty, deception, theft, cunningness, terror, exploitation, murder, murdering and the like, followed by ethically bad persons. Loka is the continuity of the conduct of the wise based on truth, and the ethical truth is the welfare of humanity. In this regard, it is prudent to quote Manu. Manusmṛti says, 'Meaning is expressed by words. The meaning of all words is

fixed therewith their words (expresser), and therefore, it is dishonesty to impose the meaning of our interest on the meaning the word expresses; the person who does so is unscrupulous. (Manu 4/256) clarifying the point, it again says 'the person deceitfully hides his true identity and by giving a fake introduction familiarizes himself, is a thief because he abducts his own soul. He cheats himself and others by forged speaking, deviates from the truth' (Manu 4/255). Loka is the path of truth of humanity that is welfare, and thus the wise should perform the duties that satisfy the purity of his/her mind and should not do that which he/she feels upsetting and painful (Manu 4/16).

X. Theories, India is Practicing for Uplifting the Society

There are four main theories of duties in practice in India, which are considered theories meant to uplift society: 1) Loka-sangraha; 2) Sarvodaya; 3) Antodaya; and 4) Utilitarianism. First, prescribed by the *Gītā*, is the basic principle of duties performed for the welfare of humanity (lokadharma). The second is popularized by M. K. Gandhi. This theory talks about the uplifting of all. Some are economically weak, others are rich but possessive and selfish, and still others are morally weak. Sarvodaya is the theory of uplifting the poor and needy economically, and the economically rich persons who are weak in thought, especially at the moral level, are uplifted to the moral level and thus, to preserve the economic equality, individual labour, non-possession, and self-dependency in the society. It is the theory of the abolition of personal property and profit that gives rise to the concept of trusteeship. According to this theory, the rich are not owners of their assets but trustees who use their wealth for the welfare of society. This idea provides a way into the theory of Antodaya, popularized by Pundit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya. The true upliftment of all rests in uplifting those left far behind in the economic, social, and cultural development. According to this, the upliftment and development of the last person in society are ensured.

Utilitarianism is a Western concept, but opponents and some scholars of utilitarian ethics who work on the comparative study of utilitarianism and the concept of Loka-sangraha mistakenly search for utilitarianism in the *Gītā*. 'Maximizing happiness for the greatest number of people' is the socio-political ethical theory of Utilitarian theorists like John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham. It thinks about the good or somehow says the welfare of the maximum number, but not all, like Sarvodaya, and thus, the good of the minorities is not taken care of by this theory. Not only that, but also there is no concept of 'duty for duty's sake or duty for the welfare of humanity (loka-kalyāṇa) sake in utilitarianism. According to this theory, a duty is moral if it promotes the happiness of the majority.

So far as the welfare of world humanity is concerned, the ethical philosophy of the foreign societies, except Sanātana, is materialistic, utilitarian, and aggressive in orientation. The orientation of Indian ethics is spiritual and cool; for it, the whole world is a single family, and duties are not moral unless performed with the attitude of welfare for all. Unlike them, it is inclusive and, in principle, accepts any theory. The Vedic tradition of ethical spirituality is the fountainhead of perpetual Vedic culture, popularly known as Dharma (Sanātana). Indian Ethics, unlike Western Ethical theories, is for the cultivation of human life. It is what the sages, seers, and the people experienced as duties worth living for a good life and a good society. The Indian perception of values and morality holds that a life is worth living to cultivate a moral character as wise as that described in scriptures, and that people follow it as members of society. It is not for theorization or further theorization, but for improving the culture of welfare. It does not talk about the good of a section of society, but for all, the whole humanity and the surrounding nature as well. Following the Śāstras, Indian people, such as Vivekananda, used to refer to Ayam bandhuḥ ayam neti gaṇanā Laghu chetasām. Udāra Charitānām tu Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (Mahā-upaniṣad, adhyāya VI, verse 71, p.357, edited in Īśādyaṣṭottaraśatopaniṣad, 1st Edition, ed. by Shrimati Moti Devi, published by Sarvahitaiṣī company and Gorakha Pustakalya, Ramaghat, 1938). In place of "Ayam bandhuḥ ayam neti," the version "Ayam nijaḥ paro veti" with the same meaning is found in Panchatantra,

Aparikṣita kāraka, 4, verse 37). It means the narrow- minded or selfish persons in their conduct discriminate that "this is mine and that belongs to others," but for a broad-minded, generous person, the whole earth is his/her Family.

The Indian concept of moral duties is defined well in half a line "Ātmanaḥ pratikulāni pareṣām na samācharet," (Padma purāṇa, śṛṣṭi khaṅda, 19/357. Mahābhārata Anuśāsana parva 84/1520). According to it, let the essence of dharma be heard, and after hearing it, let it be assimilated. Do not perform the duty that you do not want others to perform to you; one should perceive others from a respectable perspective and perform venerable conduct to them. This is the golden rule, a foundational moral principle emphasizing humanity and equality. In brief, Indian views of Dharma not only center on the welfare of humanity but also attract countries worldwide to Indian values and morality, thereby appealing to a universal audience.

XI. Indian Perception of Values and Morality and the Concept of Viksit Bharata@2047

The next two to three decades represent a great national mission that will determine India's future as a developed nation and the future of every Indian citizen. During this period, India will become a nation with a large working-age population. It is through the perception of Indian values and morality that the youth majority in India has learnt neither to surrender nor to accept defeat in the face of any challenges or difficult situations, whether caused by external forces or by antagonists within the country. They are ready to face difficult situations and come out of them. They have enabled themselves to create alternatives against all odds, address social and national problems arising from foreign countries, and utilize them to uplift the Nation.

Because of their values and moral perceptions, the youth in India are spiritually cool. Intellectually strong and educated youth used to go to temples for prayer; their hearts are cultural, and they respect the secular. They celebrate the festivals enthusiastically, practice Yoga, and are interested in spiritual knowledge with a technical mindset. They easily fit the narratives and events of the ancient Indian texts into their modern scientific lifestyle. They believe in keeping the doors open and ensuring civilian participation in the nation's progress. They work not only with the attitude of getting a salary but also with the spirit of Lokasangraha, sarvodaya, antodaya, and the will to make India the Viśvaguru.

In this context, colleges, universities, and all educational institutions are playing a central role in supporting youth pursuing education by channelizing their labour and services in a manner appropriate and sustainable with the character of a Vikasit Bhārata@2047.

A deep transformation is underway in the youth's mindset. They are the real game changers in India's journey toward becoming a developed nation. They effortlessly integrate the ancient moral teachings and narratives of the Vedas, Dharmaśāstras, Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa, and other texts, and have the potency to transform into modern idioms, becoming a living identity. Students, Researchers, and educational institutions are not only carriers of change but also its beneficiaries. With dedication, the youth are moving forward to fulfill their resolve to build a transformed family, society, and nation.

In this mission, educational institutions bear a significant responsibility. Simultaneously, the youth are also actively engaged in defining the responsibilities of these institutions toward Ātma-nirbhara Bhārata (Self-Reliant India) through inclusive development, a competitive outlook, skill development, innovation, and research-oriented, quality education, supported by a strong accreditation and certification system. This will enable institutions to build and sustain capable teams, foster a social process among students that encourages superior performance compared to competitors, and nurture the character of global leadership. Today's Indian youth are ready to transform the vision of Cultural India 2.0—an advanced version of India—into reality. For Indian youth, the roots of material, scientific, technological, and professional advancement lie in culture, while the path is ethical and spiritual. We are a traditional society with an inclusive culture. Inclusiveness means that all beneficial life values are naturally assimilated into our way of life. In this age of technological advancement, there

is a flood of information related to diverse ideologies. It becomes difficult to decide which ideology to adopt, what the ideal of development should be, and which model should guide the pace of progress. Should development follow the Western model, the Chinese model, or that of the Arab world? Such an approach would merely be imitation. Since our aim is to build a New India, imitation would neither align with our goals nor with our culture. Well aware of Indian Values and morality, the kind of development today's youth aspire to can be achieved by understanding the various global ideologies and information streams available and thoughtfully integrating them into the framework of nation-building in New India. This synthesis will create a welfare-oriented harmony between tradition and modernity.

It cannot be ignored that with the rise of AI automation, all information about a person, society, countries worldwide, the surrounding sky, the earth, and the bottom of the sea and oceans is open to the market. The nuclear power plants of the countries can be pointedly targeted by AI-guided missiles, and hence, the world is at risk with growing religious terrorism, expansionism, and the supremacy of the economically developed countries. The present education system in universities and colleges, which supports marketization, is stereotyped. It is not creative; rather, it dulls the minds of students and researchers. Despite the possibility of misuse, youths are using AI models like Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) to generate information, prepare projects, lectures, PPTs, research articles, and data, and translate them into the language they feel safe and comfortable with, using plagiarism-checking websites. It has freed them from the pressure on the mind. However, youth in India are balanced and learn using AI for personalized learning, content generation, writing, grammar, and language skill development, exam preparation, building technical projects for research, and homework support. Having awareness of Values and morality, present Youth, in their individual and institutional services, are natural participants in the continuous flow of development in all walks of life.

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