AN ESSAY TOWARDS CULTURAL AUTONOMY

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During the two hundred years between the American national anthem which sings of 'the land of the free and the home of the brave' and the song by the Beatles that says 'all I can tell you is that you've got to be free', the theme of freedom conquered many minds. It is today a widespread assumption that freedom is the only worthwhile goal.

One thing that free people must do is explore the problem of being free, being an explorer. Explorers are not boy scouts. Freedom is hard. Let us face that aspect of its hardness that we must deal with. Our freedom as a culture is at stake. Can those abilities that are distinctively ours help us to explore, to be free, at a higher level, now that the only way out for us is the way up ?

The art of schematic and abstract classification and the mathematical and logical arts related to it come naturally to us as a culture; consider Pāṇinian grammar, the Nyāya tradition of logic, the elaborate taxonomies in the paurāṇika culture, and the detailed segmentations in our social order. In this spirit, we should surely work on the task of digesting notions like deduction, induction, hypothesizing and so forth into a satisfying system, and on the substantive as well as formal problems of formulating a defensible correlation between scientific and ethical matters. This essay will undertake these tasks in an exploratory vein.

The system we arrive at will help answer the question of what we are supposed to do with the two extreme programmes, simple idealism and simple materialism, towards which serious thinking about freedom has gravitated. Let us start by outlining these programmes.

The simple idealist programme for setting ourselves free from material bondage says we can live a free inner life and overcome outer difficulties if we realize that our spirit is unbindable by material constraints because the spirit is the primary reality. The material world is a passing show of appearances or phenomena.

The simple materialist programme for releasing authentic life from the oppression of unjust social structures postulates the organization of matter-energy, whose highest form is social life and its reproduction, as the primary reality. Repressive superstructures and symbolic representations are secondary toys thrown up in the course of games people play as they vie with one another. Only the material world where we live is seriously present and must be fought for. Real people — those who are in the closest touch with material reality because they (re-) produce the means of everybody's daily life, the working masses — must fight together to attain just and stable social arrangements for the future.

A subtler formulation of these visions of collective liberty and individual liberty might restate the former so as to emphasize material well-being and play down the justice dimension and correspondingly restate the latter so as to make spirit and matter co-primary. These revised visions are reconcilable, as in the abstraction that the Third World calls development, steering various courses between capitalism and communism. However, it seems historically and logically right to take Marxist thought as the representative of the materialist programme; the capitalist stance resists formulation as a true vision because it has no theoretical conception of simple idealism as a friend or an enemy and thus must be regarded as essentially pretheoretical. Marxists, as consistent materialists, hold that people who believe that inner freedom is supreme will voluntarily accept social subjection and that therefore the idealist pipe dream is an enemy of the revolution.

In our country, much of what passes for fundamental thought pertains to the simple materialist and idealist programmes as stated above. Our materialists seek, or lament the absence of, ancient Indian ideas of social liberty, and wish to shake us up

so that we wake up in the real world. Our idealists want to wake everybody up from the modern world's dogmatic slumber so that we rediscover the inner self, which alone is truly free. While these efforts have value, they are not fundamental. The person, whose freedom is supposedly at stake, gets pushed into the background in both programmes, and even ceases to exist conceptually. The Marxist thinker Althusser was right when he responded to the Khrushchev thesis that there had been a cult of Stalin's personality by pointing out that Marxist theory recognizes no such thing as a cult of personality and that, if Marxist self-criticism was to begin, one would have to reconceptualize. He then built, over the years, a theory of superstructure that says that social ideological forces construct each person in their own image. If persons are ideological forms, the attempt to characterize Stalinism must obviously leave persons (and their cult) alone and must seek guidance in such structural theses as Trotsky's 'bureaucratic counterrevolution' analysis. While strict materialism, as just shown, regards persons as formed by the play of social structures, simple idealism views persons as due to another form of play. Play of what? That depends on which version of idealism it is. Play of meaningless natural forces. Or of the pure spirit disguised as natural factors. Either way, the spirit, in which meaning inheres, the primary reality, exists more seriously than persons, who strictly speaking do not exist. Thus simple idealism and materialism accord a secondary place to the person and a primary one to the principle of freedom — materiality or ideality.

Note that people who adhere to one of these programmes often believe in heroically or lovingly effacing their personhood to exalt the social or spiritual principle of freedom. Since people are not formal schemata, all this is complex and diverse; for example, much advaitin thought eludes my skeletal caricature of idealism; but it is true that many materialists identify with the community, while many idealists identify with, or into, the spirit who is all. In both cases, one must educate the self and push the natural person in some disciplined direction. The programme that defines this direction postulates an absolute freedom; it either hopes to go beyond the fragile finitude of personalities or aims to concentrate the untapped

collective powers of the social crucible in which persons arise and fall.

What is the natural state of the person who is to decide whether and how to abandon this state? If the person accepts freedom as the goal, what is the source from which to move towards freedom?

C. Wright Mills offers an answer in *The Sociological Imagination*. Persons are situated both in circles of intimacy and acquaintance, *milieux*, which are the stuff biography is made of, and in macrosocial formations or *structures*, whose adventures through time are called history.

This dual situatedness — it takes a Mills to pinpoint the duality! — is usually, oversimply, described by saying that people live in *society*. In an optimal society, milieux and structures are held together by what we may call *private* and *public* bonding, respectively. Societies are not optimal; the integrating that bonding leaves undone tends to get done by bondage instead. The order of bondage has roots in a subsoil of bonding that keeps alive the prospects of freedom, the victory of bonding over bondage. Given these characterizations, the person lives in society, so constituted — the person lives in concrete milieux and abstract structures. Both involve bonding and, failing that, bondage.

If you value clear and fair bonding and feel a need to sruggle against bondage, you may come to construe bonding in terms of an idealist or materialist view of the conceptual content of bonding. These represent attempts to sharpen the feeling that freedom is the victory of bonding over bondage. Thus the present approach illuminates the goals as well as the source of the freedom programmes.

Now we may think about according philosophical primacy or coprimacy to the persons who are the subjects/objects of bonding/bondage. The remainder of this essay will attempt this. We will be proposing, among other things, that the reality of persons is proportionate to how much *initiative* they take in initiating bonding as opposed to bondage. This amounts to saying, 'You go out of your way for the sake of those you care for.

When you must serve a master, you stick to what you have to do. You are really yourself — not an alienated means to someone's ends — when you do something with vigour, willing to put yourself out and go out of your way.' The notion of initiative is related to that of support. We want the world to support us actively, not just to permit us, passively, to exist; the maxim 'do to others what you want done to yourself' implies that therefore we must go out of our way and support others. To the extent that we do so, we are free, and therefore real, and therefore we *live* a philosophy that affirms the reality of persons prior to asking questions about materiality and ideality in a technical framework.

2

So far, the discourse has made no contact with the philosophy of modern science, whose centrality no inquirer can ignore today. This essay will operate with a certain conception of the rational history of the philosophy of inquiry (including the empirical sciences and mathematics) and propose that this conception carries over to the philosophy of action.

We will assume that there are four significant moments — deductive, inductive, conjectural, and programmatic — in the logical history of the philosophy of inquiry. You may associate these moments, if you wish, with such names as Pythagoras, Bacon, Popper, and Lakatos, respectively; but this essay will avoid the footnote-mongering style of historiography.

The deductive moment entertains the possibility that deducing logical consequences from obvious first principles will give us knowledge. Mathematics as a mode of knowledge stays at this moment. Empirical science leaves it and embarks on a voyage that has not yet ended.

The inductive moment renounces, temporarily or permanently, the possibility of any true and certain knowledge of factual (as distinct from mathematical or conceptual) first principles. But one continues to recognize the need to organize each field of inquiry in terms of initial postulates and systematic consequences. These postulates, the inductive mind assumes, are

to be obtained by inductive generalization from carefully gathered and checked particulars. Primarily descriptive domains of investigation such as certain branches of geography remain at the inductive moment. Other sciences need to go beyond it.

The conjectural moment is also called hypothetico-deductive. It denies the usefulness of induction in hypothesis formation and plays down the question of how hypotheses arise, stressing instead the need for deducing testable consequences from given hypotheses and seeking empirical refutation as a method of eliminating hypotheses. Perhaps detection as practised by Sherlock Holmes or Hercules Poirot is a domain for the conjectural moment in its pure form. In the case of the sciences, moment three leads inexorably to moment four.

The fourth and *programmatic* moment stresses the organic continuity of the core of a research programme. In the face of routine refutations of small-scale concrete conjectures, auxiliary assumptions need to be revised continually; this revision is a principled process reflecting the character of the research tradition. The core postulates are revised more slowly, again in a principled fashion.

This outline is not meant as an adequate description. Let it serve as an indication of the areas of thought in the philosophy of inquiry that this essay presupposes. Those who wish to read this essay critically will have to have or acquire some knowledge of standard work in the philosophy of science. My Bangla article *Biggan, shotti kotha, ar shoto pushpo* ('science, truth, and a hundred flowers', published in 1982 in the journal *Baromas* vol. 4 no. 5, pp. 45-9) presents some material about the inductive, conjectural, and programmatic moments and proposes a polysystemic handling of research programmes, invoking a distinction between tactical multiplicity of approaches and strategic unity of thought-style. The reader is referred to such purely epistemological writings for more detailed discussion of the philosophy of inquiry per se. The project in this essay is to bring out and make use of a deep affinity between the thematic progression of the four moments in the philosophy of inquiry and a similar progression in the philosophy of action.

At the outset we must meet the widely respected objection that there is no valid derivation of value from fact, of ought from is. The heart of this objection is the feeling that no amount of fact-gathering will lead us to principles that can guide action or teach us about freedom. This makes sense only if the objector also feels that fact-gathering does lead to empirical principles. Thus the source of the objection is clearly an inductive cast of mind. My 1982 article mentioned above pointed out the affinity between the inductive moment of the philosophy of inquiry and the utilitarian moment of moral philosophy, the moment associated with John Stuart Mill in particular. The strategy of utilitarianism, a theory still accepted uncritically in much economic thinking and planning (often without awareness of the presupposed moral theory), is to collect short-term interests of individuals and inductively to arrive at the long-term interests of society, with which the enlightened individual should identify for the sake of the least evil, the greatest good of the greatest number. This is obviously the moral equivalent of inductive epistemology.

It seems reasonably easy to answer the objection. The objector himself, an incarnation of Mill, finds that his cast of mind — which happens to be inductive — accustoms him to a certain style of rationality, which he adheres to both in the philosophy of inquiry and in moral philosophy. Thus, even if we grant, for argument's sake, the point that factual premises alone never entail a moral conclusion, we may insist on the match or harmony between particular empirical rationalities and particular moral reasoning-styles. We may contend that this harmony is significant and adopt the working hypothesis that there is a four-moment thematic progression in moral philosophy analogous to the progression outlined above for the philosophy of inquiry.

In making this move we distance ourselves not only from British inductivism but even from certain much less prosaic and more radical-sounding doctrines which appeal to the young to this day, such as Sartrean existentialism. The notion of individual freedom in the early Sartre, although less ponderously and more playfully presented, is not less inductive, in our sense,

than the utilitarian view; Sartre was fond of insisting that empirical sciences deal in probabilities. The later Sartre worked out some detailed consequences of the efforts modern people make to put their wishes together and order society in a way that releases the individual's dreams; again, though Sartre is concrete and excited about it, the notion of putting people's wishes together remains an inductive one. This point is not new, in the sense that Lévi-Strauss made some vituperative remarks in *The Savage Mind* to roughly this effect. What is new is our attempt to go beyond inductivism in the moral domain explicitly, theoretically.

It is important to see why this deserves attention. The inductive world-view, in one form or another, underlies the ideology of democracy, beyond which social and political thought has not moved. Thus, it is at least theoretically important to ask whether there are coherent moral philosophies which correspond to the conjectural and programmatic moments in epistemology. For some concrete social grounds for believing that we need to move beyond the perspective of Hobbes, Locke, and Mill, consider the following.

In today's world, there is a general assumption of rationality or enlightenment (even in the apparent exceptions, such as fundamentalist societies like Iran's which merely define rationality differently). We manage our economies on the advice of specialists. We sell our bodies to doctors and our minds to psychologists. Our very perception of people is an educated perception, informed by the insight of fiction, poetry, films, and other art. Thus, the individual's life no longer confronts reality directly, but through the conceptual and practical structures of specialist guilds (of economists, doctors, artists, etc.) which exercise a bureaucratic power that is often overlooked in discussions of the problem of bureaucracy. Every individual member of each of these bureaucracies feels powerless also, both because of the many other bureaucracies and because an individual bureaucrat is bound by the rules and slow rhythm of the guild (as vividly shown in Kafka's fiction). Nobody is free monad with directly definable wishes or epistemological stances; the world presupposed by inductivism does not exist (or at least is not our world).

A different but not unrelated point pertains to the question of sovereignty with respect to the transparencies of such institutions as the language of a community. Let us ask : does the state have the right to legislate about syntax, everyday words, spelling etc. ? What right ? Does language rest on a social consensus which, working through the state, may deliberately alter it ? No clear answers exist; more importantly, no answer can even be imagined in the inductive democratic perspective, which, with its philosophy, must therefore be superseded.

3

Let us bear in mind the details of the four-moment progression in the philosophy of inquiry and expect to find something similar in moral philosophy, which is an independent domain and should lead us independently to postulate a similar progression.

The first deductive moment of *religion* is clear, in the sense that we intuitively take it for granted. Let us not try to distance ourselves deliberately from this feeling, although such an exercise needs to be undertaken elsewhere (and it has been).

The second and inductive moment in moral philosophy arises in the form of a stand-off between conflicting and equally powerful deductive systems. Given the absence of pansocial consensus on moral and religious matters, the notion of a community dissolves; mutual service of the spontaneous kind that flourishes in a homogeneous community becomes impossible, because opaque; urban or 'bourgeois' (a word that once meant 'urban') non-mutuality and insular non-acquaintance prevail. Judgment, deprived of natural first principles, accepts the legal principle of preponderant evidence in ascertaining facts and motives, and the utilitarian principle of preponderant interest (and related principles of obligation and right) in deciding what to do. Carried to an extreme, this stance yields skepticism about the existence of other selves (Karl Popper has pointed out that such skepticism has an inductivist basis), which undermines the golden rule 'Do to others what you want others to do to you'. One would normally assume that the golden rule, shared by all religions and, Kropotkin argues in encyclopaedic detail,

all cultures, could be a consensual rallying point accepted even in an inductive secularism; but the golden rule becomes unintelligible, and a fortiori inapplicable, if one is not even sure that there are others, and if one is any case unable without protracted sifting of evidence to ascertain what people are doing and why (this stance stops short of solipsism but leaves the existence of others contentless because it holds that we can have little or no knowledge of what others do or what they have in mind).

It seems that the ontological sterility of the second moment leads to the third, *conjectural* moment which makes it possible to operate with a less legalistic and more authentic notion of reality. One has to realize that the ambience of mutual non-acquaintance of early urbanity is due to the fact that persons are self-revealing and are not automatically knowable, which means that one would naturally start with a blank slate of urban anonymity. Persons are free to express themselves, and only if they do this will others see who they are, and thus come to know their reality. The golden rule functions here in a way that is often overlooked. It goes like this : 'If you want to support me actively and not just tolerate me passively (and possibly denying my existence in your ontology), you have to be real for me and come out and encounter me half-way. I want this. So, by the golden rule, I owe it to you to be real for you and to support you. Thus I must act in excess of what is inductively warranted, I must act in such a way that it becomes clear who I am; thus I set you an example, remind you that you have an audience, and, by going out of my way morally, put my "money" on the conjecture that you and I and others inhabit a common moral space that we can all recognize if we act.'

Instead of mechanically passing on immediately to the fourth moment, let us explore a few properties of moment three. The conjecturing inquirer stands to lose the conjecture in the sense that the facts may refute it; what does the conjecturing moral actor stand to lose ? The moral counterpart of refutation is the world's condemnation of my initiative through the voice of my conscience. The world will not necessarily tell me when I am

right, but it will (through my conscience) tell me when I am wrong; this is one dimension of the Bhagavadgītā statement that we have no right to the fruit of our action. Since the world will condemn many actions, I will see that the world is real and independent of my reality. This indirect condemnation — my inner feeling that what I did was wrong or went wrong — is a subtle one which leaves me free to harden my heart, to stifle my conscience the way Pinocchio killed the cricket (in the unsentimental original Pinocchio on which Walt Disney based his children's movie); precisely the fact that I am free to choose whether I wish to see the world's verdict as real and as meant for me makes me realize that I don't want to wish away all negative judgments on my actions, but that I want to learn from them. The world is a graceful teacher; I can learn how to act gracefully and to express what my reality is without acting in ways violative of other realities.

How is this different, you may ask, from existentialist freedom of choice? A theoretical answer is that, under extreme existentialism, pursuit of conjectures would constitute unfreedom and becomes illicit. I can make this clearer by quoting from Camus's review of Sartre's *Le Mur and Other Stories* (see pp 203-6 of Camus's *Lyrical and Critical Essays*, ed. Philip Thody, New York : Vintage Books, 1970; the review is also anthologized elsewhere) :

'M. Sartre has a certain taste for impotence ... which leads him to choose characters who have arrived at the limits of their selves, stumbling over an absurdity they cannot overcome. The obstacle they come up against is their own lives, and I will go so far as to say that they do so through an excess of liberty. / / These beings with no attachments, no principles, no Ariadne's thread, are so free they disintegrate, deaf to the call of action or creation. A single problem preoccupies them, and they have not defined it. ... / / The fascination such a story evokes is undeniable. One cannot put it down, and soon the reader too acquires that higher, absurd freedom which leads the characters to their own ends. / / For his characters are, in fact, free. But their liberty is of no use to them. At least, this is what M. Sartre demonstrates. And doubtless this explains

the often overwhelming emotional impact of these pages as well as their cruel pathos. For in this universe man is free of the shackles of his prejudices, sometimes from his own nature, and, reduced to self-contemplation, becomes aware of his profound indifference to everything that is not himself. He is alone, enclosed in this liberty. ... His condition is absurd.'

In contrast, we are postulating a person who does have an Ariadne's thread and is committed to tuning the principles of the self to those of a discoverable moral universe through the method of conjecture. Thanks to Camus's literary powers, perhaps you can also *feel* the difference now.

Will it help if we look briefly at yet another domain? Consider poetry. Deductive poets are certain that strict metre and rhyme (or other alliteration) are obligatory; they produce classical verse. Inductive existentialist poets write anything down and call it a poem; they have the right to do so; and they have no warrant for seeing anything as less poetic than anything else. The conjectural poet tries out various possibilities and, on the basis of an evolving personal poetics, writes a poem and sees if it sounds right or wrong; the outcome modifies the poetics a little bit each time. Perhaps this analogy clarifies the difference between inductive freedom and conjectural - freedom.

Sartre gives us valuable clues to various facets of the inductive universe, which people have by no means finished exploring (recall that, among the sciences, some are descriptive and will validly remain inductive for ever). His *Being and Nothingness* contains a fascinating study of love which tries to show that love is impossible because the would-be lover is forced to choose between (a) being a subject and reducing the beloved to objecthood, the sadist mode, and (b) being an object for the beloved subject, the masochist mode; one cannot be both at once. In the inductive universe, this argument is surely flawless. It is also instructive in an unexpected way. The sadist and masochist choices Sartre describes so well correspond to two philosophical responses to the sterility of the inductive problematic. Assuming that the thinker has insufficient warrant for claims to valid knowledge, and feeling frustrated with this assumption,

one may want (a) to grant apodictic validity to the knower's self-knowledge, or (b) to declare by fiat that the universe with all its causal intricacy is real and causes knowledge to arise inductively in our heads, valid knowledge because it is duly caused. These moves, called idealism and materialism respectively, correspond exactly to Sartre's sadism and masochism, the flight from objecthood and the flight into objecthood. The inductive basis of such moves is particularly clear in the case of materialism : consider the writings of Lenin and Mao on epistemology. In the case of idealism, there is recent work by Popper showing that idealism crucially rests on inductive premises. We begin to see that the transition from moment two (the inductive moment) to the third, conjectural moment cuts several Gordian knots.

But this moment does not go far enough. I am not saying this for the mechanical reason that I expect a counterpart to the fourth moment of the philosophy of inquiry, although I am proposing that the deep parity between inquiry and action is real and should guide our thought. For a reason purely internal to the moral domain, moral philosophy too must move into moment four. The reason is that moment three does not apply the golden rule thoroughly enough. This failure is not a historical accident in real life or an expository trick on my part (holding some cards back for later use), but springs from the conceptual exigencies of a moment which accords centrality to the person as a conjecturer. Let us see how moment four overcomes this limitation.

4

Moment three tells the moral agent to take action and face the consequences and learn from them. But our acts are not only concretely testable, subject to success or failure. They are also abstractly testable, not for success but for 'grammaticality' or naturalness. In some theoretical setting, an action we are contemplating must 'feel right' or 'sound right' or 'make sense', independently of our willingness to bet that the action will be concretely successful. This theoretical setting, the *moral tradition,* is the locus moment four, the programmatic moment, of moral philosophy.

We may begin quite simply, by extending the golden rule to dead and unborn people : do to the dead what you want the unborn to do to you. We find that we want to continue the unfinished projects of others because we want the future to take up our own projects where we leave off. This leads us immediately into a moral tradition, although we still seem to be within the conceptual world of moment three, dealing as we are with a person-to-person problematic. Actually, this is an illusion. The dead and the unborn, in the vast sense that is operative here, are not felt as individuals; when we apply the golden rule to them, we have really already made it to moment four.

A moral tradition involves bonding and, failing that, bondage, in the sense discussed in section one. The world of moral traditions is a social world with its milieux and structures. Acting on behalf of your tradition, do to other traditions what you would have them do to you : allow for them, give them space to be. This calls for action, as all structuring, including the structuring of space, calls for work. This work is necessary not only between macro-traditions, but even within a single tradition to clarify the relationship between micro-traditions. A blanket secular or ecumenical declaration of tolerance can be no substitute for structuring work. Let us sharpen this polemical statement.

The present essay is part of a tradition, which I see as one shared by such different-looking figures as Gandhi and Tagore, of affirming the active sociality of persons and explicitly opposing the Manichaean traditions — like Christianity, Judaism, middle-eastern Islam (perhaps something qualitatively different is to be expected from such cultural crucibles as Indonesia, Bangladesh, and even India and Pakistan, whose Islams will some day come into their own), the socialist re-elaboration of Judaeo-Christian and classical ideas, the capitalist rearrangement of European paganism — which all assume that the private and the public are primordially distinct spheres. The outcome of various church-state struggles that arose from this assumption has been varied, but the spectrum from France, through America, to Iran shows us nothing but dogmatic

(fundamentalist) intolerance and dogmatic (materialist) tolerance of various churches by a purely public state. It is not necessary to accept this as the entire spectrum. Gandhi and Tagore spoke for an alternative. Although they were different, in ways that have been much discussed, they both held that the nation-state machine in its present form would have to go, and that the possessive (not to say rapacious) individual built in its image would have to remould itself into a new type of person willing and able to undertake and sustain radical social sructuring. Such action would have to reflect a sane and reasoned philosophy continuous with the beginnings of a properly nurturing, human society that Gandhi and Tagore had both perceived in the Indian countryside.

Of course, they had perceived this by abstracting away from the distorting effects of colonial and other devastation. The point was not to continue the habits of our rurality in any superficial sense. Tagore and Gandhi attacked such pillars of our ancient order as untouchability, male chauvinism, cognitive obscurantism leaving initiative to the upper strata etc. so consistently and vehemently that one might take Gandhi and Tagore for enemies of rural India (Naipaul makes this mistake in his not entirely insightless book *An Area of Darkness* in Gandhi's case). What they wanted to cherish and nurture was the primacy of the milieu and of bonding and the explicit recognition that action must be in terms of traditions (and the moral communities that they imply) and, we may add, in terms of programmes and the intellectual communities that *they* entail — not in terms of monadic individuals entering into a social contract that they may tear up tomorrow for reasons just as arbitrary as their motives today. Tagore and Gandhi were concerned about the *ecology* of personalities. About balance.

This concern led them to outline in their writings an overall philosophy which corresponds to the new cognitive and practical perspective, to the genuinely collective and *re*-collective orientation from which feminism, the environmental movement, the struggle of non-white people in the West, the global struggle of the South against the North, and other contemporary movements draw strength. This new orientation does

not seek to rise on the ashes of a forgettable past, but works
for an ecological understanding and practical recognition of
our environment in physical and cultural space and time.
Supersession, we have learnt in science and have to learn in
social life, does not kill. Earlier moments live on, restricted to
specific domains which become special cases of the new
generalities. This is the answer to the anguish of Max Weber,
who in *Science as a Vocation* gives us the impression that scien-
tists must learn to accept, with stoicism, the fact that their
work will die and be forgotten and that the very sciences in
which they are working will diversify and dissolve for ever. If
we do not learn how to handle the past with grace, it is of
course natural to feel anguish about mortality; the answer to
the anguish is that there are bonds through time and space. By
recognizing their reality, we make them come true. A young
Parisian in 1968 scrawled on some wall, 'I take my desires for
reality because I believe in the reality of my desires'; if we can
transcend (and therefore, in reading the line, ignore) the ex-
cessive me-centredness, this is exactly right; that is the nature
of human reality in general.

It is in this spirit that we must ask what role the fourth,
programmatic moment as our tradition sees it will assign to the
elements of the earlier moments discussed in this essay. It is
clearly impossible to give a full answer in an abstract discus-
sion; the question is in large part a practical one. But I would
like to propose some elements of an answer. The pivotal notion
is that of rhythm — invoking the hum of Gandhi's spinning
wheel and the subtle, non-ornamental rhythm of Tagore's
mature poetry. The ideas about rhythm proposed here, if cor-
rect, not only help us see the content of moment four in the
moral domain, but even enable us to begin the work of incubat-
ing moment five at the heart of moment four. Each moment
much bring up the future which will take over from it in due
course.

5

The conceptual progression we have been looking at in the
philosophy of inquiry and moral philosophy is a rhythmic

sequence of four moments. The deductive moment introduces the theme of necessity. The inductive moment counterposes the theme of contingent or arbitrary (non-necessary) reality. The conjectural moment restores the distinct role of necessity as the only valid mode of serial (antecedent-consequent) inference and stresses that there is no immediate contact between fact and hypothesis — facts do not (inductively) engender hypotheses, and they do not directly bear them out; facts can only refute entailments of hypotheses. The programmatic moment reaffirms induction as exposure, factual and conceptual, to a setting, and makes it apparent that the growth of a programme has non-deductive exigencies of its own which constrain the roles deduction can play. The rhythm should be obvious. The third moment echoes the first. The fourth moment echoes the second.

Whereas moment three is the moment of learning to take responsibility by formulating coherent personal responses and remaining accountable for these choices, moment four extends this responsibility to a collective and recollective (ecological) perspective, thus raising the question of macro responses, echoes, parities, rhythms. Moment four also makes available one sort of answer to this question : the deduction-induction macro-rhythm, which begins to appear at moment three, is confirmed at moment four. However, moment four cannot itself pursue the matter which it raises, for logically it cannot at the same time confirm a pattern implicitly (by displaying certain properties as it unfolds) and thematize this pattern explicitly. Moment five can and must take up the problem. Moment four has to prepare for that.

Rhythm involves repetition. But what sort of repetition ? Consider the difference between deduction at moment one, 'because necessarily p, therefore necessarily q' (recall that Moment One geometry, for instance, is a Euclidean geometry held to be uniquely and evidently true), and the restored deduction of moment three, 'given hypothesis p, we get consequence q'. The direct induction of moment two likewise gives way at moment four to a sophisticated notion of exposure to which the subject actively responds by forming and trying out hypotheses at so

many levels of consciousness that the result looks like classical
induction just as the motion of the earth gives us the impres-
sion of the sun rising and setting (this analogy is due to Chom-
sky's 1978 Columbia University lectures later published as *Rules
and Representations,* a book which, I seem to remember, does
not stress this analogy). In both cases, the second version of
the theme is more indirect, more transpersonal, and thus more
reflective of the broader scheme of things. The repetition in-
volved in rhythm is inexact by design, in both of the major
senses of *design.*

Moment five is apparently supposed to bring back the pri-
macy of deduction in some manner. But this will be a new
deduction — neither concomitant necessity (moment one) nor
entailment (moment three). I suggest that it will be a parallel
(rather than serial) relationship of the type we are outlining
in this essay. In other words, under the logic of moment five,
there will be a mode of reasoning which says, 'In system A,
x and y are related — for example, x entails y; there is parity
between A and B, and B contains p and q which match x and
y; hence p and q are related'. There will be official permission
to reason by analogy, because more will be known about the
properties of analogies and about where and why analogies do
not, as orthodox thought puts it, 'mislead'. The crude notions
of matching entities in different subsystems which I am appeal-
ing to in this exposition will give way to something conceiv-
able in its full richness only in the corresponding moral
universe of moment five, where the moral agent is basking in
the restored glory of the individual (recall that moment one,
with the individual religionist, and moment three, with the
initiative-taking person, are personalist, while moment two and
four, morally, are collectivist). In the moral philosophy of
moment five, no doubt, one person can act in far fuller tuning
with the moral life of another person, for people of that more
mature moment know themselves and each other better; they
are diverse and plural, but they know how to communicate and
tune in across such differences because they understand parity.

Articulating this dream permits us to talk about what we of
moment four are supposed to do to help incubate this future
We are supposed to build and sustain a social order which civi-

lizes individuals towards such a moment five — which teaches us how to tame diversity and remain in touch with parity without overunifying.

There was an overunifying streak in all programmes that arose in the inductive setting. Interestingly enough, moment three inherits one aspect of this, and only the 'newly inductive' fourth moment makes it possible to overcome this problem. Moment three in its pure form presents the image of a disjointed series of idea-bursts and initiatives, which reflect possibly incompatible cognitive and moral styles. People are faced with the impossible task of inductively gathering the pieces to put Humpty Dumpty together again, but a Humpty Dumpty who was never together to begin with. Moment four insists that a conjecture or an initiative must make sense and involves inhabiting a partly conscious, partly unconscious conceptual milieu within which conceptual evaluation precedes the launching of conjectures and initiatives. This means that there are going to be lots of different and specific, concretely living milieux with styles of their own. We need not imagine an abstract inductive gatherer who goes around collecting successful conjectures and bundling them together into fields without caring about traditions and other affinities. There is no externally imposed artificial globality of thought. Or action. What unity there is stems from the tradition or the programme, and is not imposed by a background-blind computation. To the extent that traditions can reach out, genuinely touch each other, and discern equivalences which matter, a new type of unity can emerge, the way to moment five. But this can happen only if the isolated idea or initiative stops being regarded as the unit of value. Entities must act in some sort of concert.

Initially, and that is where we must begin, we need an educational umbrella which, both on grounds of political feasibility and sociological efficiency and on general moral principles, must be based on some sort of common denominator. Thus, the structures of society are supposed to be public in the materialist sense, and it is in building and thinking about these structures that the materialist programme and its morality and epistemology must play a role, of course in a re-thought form

that gets rid of the inductive hang-ups which plagued the origin
of materialism. Some beginnings of the new materialism we
need appear in the later work of Michel Foucault, for example.
I am thinking especially of his *History of Sexuality*, which sets
aside the negative view of the 'state machine' prevalent
in radical thought and points out ways in which positive action
(we may think about 'affirmative action', for instance) that
only statelike structures can undertake and have undertaken
constitute and sustain essential practical, cognitive, and emo-
tional formations.

If one is serious about sva-raj, self-rule, one must concep-
tually recognize certain institutions as positive agencies of man-
agement. Such guilds as the scientific community in each
domain, the community of serious film-makers in each society,
etc. have begun to exercise an as yet poorly understood mode
of power that one can imagine taming but not eliminating;
the point is to manage it, to relativize it. As Plato pointed out
when he decided to examine the republic and not the indi-
vidual, the republic alone is a big enough unit to give us a
complete view of persons. This is obvious; people as diverse as
Ben Anderson, Laclau, and Jean-Marie Benoit are discovering
how real the nation is. Institutions are the skeleton of a nation.
In the perspective of moment four, we must adopt (and take
over) this skeleton to help organize the work of educating our-
selves towards moment five. And initially this overall network
of national structures is going to have to be 'neutral' so as to
make traffic possible; materialism is just about as neutral as we
can get.

In the other direction, the programmes which are at the
heart of moment four — the traditions — are microsocial, not
macrosocial; they pertain to milieux, not structures. At that
level, idealist modes of discourse and interaction are appro-
priate, no doubt with an effort to outgrow the idealism of
moment two, but idealism nonetheless. Of course, in a society
where sufficiently many people are striving, with some success,
to defeat all sorts of pathology, the original idealist foil, the
hostile and absurd external world, no longer remains as
a bogey, and the point of idealism becomes maintaining the

self as a continuity and integrity which keeps us from losing ourselves in the increasingly lush arena; but it is clear that enough of the thought of classical idealism carries over to this situation that we can maintain it as the appropriate mode for the domain where people develop and nourish their traditions and personalities, the domain of milieux.

This much is fairly orthodox. All I have done is state Tagore's idea of adopting the scientific method in the external world and the teachings of the East for the inner life redefining slightly the notions of outer and inner. The result is a stance not unfamiliar to people who have considered combinations of, say, 'transcendental idealism' and 'empirical realism'. It can lead to disaster, as in cases which I plan to discuss in another article. I would now like to make some crucial points.

With advances in our systematic knowledge, especially of causal and ecological structures in the systems of culture and life, increasingly many of our actions become conscious, and therefore must be carried out with responsibility, instead of leaving all balancing work to the invisible hand. But advance also brings specialization. Let alone science, even the arts are specialized, which means that such art forms as the novel and the cinema which are to educate our perceptions often do not reach, and cannot educate, large numbers of people. If people are not educated and therefore not responsive, how will they act responsibly ?

In line with the Tagore-Gandhi stress on popular participation in the task of dissolving structures and giving all power to milieux, I would like to propose the notion of the popular *arena* where programmes and traditions have to present themselves to each other understandably and critically. The importance of the arena increases in an epoch of specialization. Popular culture, popular science, etc., transmitted into a forum where the moral and intellectual traditions present themselves for positive criticism by their fellow traditions in the popular (non-technical) idiom and where the traditions educate the public to the point at which they become qualified to criticize responsibly, can set up such an arena, and are beginning to do so in modern societies.

The human sciences, which study milieux and structures and thus are answerable to both materialism and idealism, have an important task. They must be not only sciences, but activities that have to do with structuring the arena itself. For the arena ultimately forms individual personalities; and it is clear that a mature human science will have to help us as persons to form and reform ourselves intelligently. A responsible Indian intelligentsia may be expected to examine the possibility of presenting the orientation developed by such modern Indians as Tagore and Gandhi as an epistemology and axiology for the human sciences, obviously with much rethinking, drawing on older traditions which we recognize as ours, borrowing from other places where appropriate, and innovating outright when necessary. Equally important is the hard job of making all this thinking arena-worthy. There have to be artists of the right kind.

To change the image, the arena is a social sea. Only the sea is objective. All rhythms meet there.

Generalized materialistic structures within which milieux, pursuing particular programmes in an idealistic mode, reach out and contact each other, perceiving rhythms and deep parities, and, by these very communications, constitute a fertile social sea : this is the image. The necessary initial disparity between personal, idealistic milieux of bonding ('love') and impersonal, materialistic structures of contract ('justice') sets up some new rhythm of potential parity which we cannot hope to begin to read today.

We must take seriously the work of our own epoch. We tend to see the intimacy of milieux and the need for justice in structures as polar opposites : consider the cases of nepotism and of using state resources for party purposes. We fail to conceive of separate personal dignity and unified social effort in ways that are compatible : hence we fail in dignity and in unity. We have to find practical solutions to these fundamental problems. It seems to me that fundamental thought must develop in close touch with our practical enterprises. The full weight of modern science and the full scale of classical Indian systematic thought must both be present in such attempts, with the con-

creteness of our daily life serving to mediate between these modes of abstraction. If organic systematization and concreteness fail, our culture will not regain svaraj if we fail to take science entirely seriously, science will remain a marginal ritual, a time bomb that will give us some time to come to our senses and then, after the deadline, blow us up. There are major intellectual lapses in the writings of such figures, even such figures, as Tagore and Gandhi, who stopped short of taking science seriously in their life and thought — lapses of 'intellectual taste', to quote the characterization in Lévi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques* of mediaeval Western travellers' tales of mermaids and other imaginary creatures who, like the unicorn, mechanically combine fragments of known beings. As we begin to understand that mechanical combination is a symptom of getting stuck in the inductive swamp, and that getting out of this is going to call for faith (of which self-confidence and a willingness to stick your neck out for the sake of a conjecture are important special cases), or courage, we can outgrow these and related disorders. Obviously, there is no growth without disorder; but real growth means getting over our adolescence.

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