

The Relation of Religion (Dharma) and Science in Psychological Concept

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Abstract

In this research paper, we will try to address questions such as what has been the relation of religion with science and philosophy and what has been its role in overpowering the psychological paradigm? How does psychology convert our objective or subjective problems into solutions? Is modernity anti-religion and science-oriented? Can this be resolved through psychological methods? There is no fundamental idea of modernity in India. Such questions suddenly arise in our mind, and if we try to find a solution to this in Indian classical tradition and modern contemporary philosophy, then the inter-relationship between religion, science and psychology is reflected, which cannot be separated. We can find solutions to problems only with their help because the entire conceptual system is created according to the psychological situation. Western scholars like phenomenologist Edmund Husserl believe that only a mythical experimental view is known in India and no theoretical thought is known. There is no philosophy in India and China. Apart from Husserl, many scholars who have written the history of philosophy, while writing lectures on world philosophy, do not put Indian philosophy in the category of philosophy and consider it inspired by religious, spiritual and experimental goals.

Keywords: Religion, science, psychological paradigm, mechanical laws, matter, mind.

Introduction

The Western tradition names Descartes and Kant as the architects of the humanism of the enlightenment of modernity. What was the view of these two philosophers, who supported the test of intellect through intellect and reason, regarding God? The first noble truth, obtained by Descartes through the method of doubt, is that 'I think, therefore I am.' After that, the idea of God's existence is seen in this 'I' with the idea of scholarly perfection, but how has the validity and importance of the criterion of truth of the theory of knowledge has been determined? Descartes says with devotion in 'Discourse on Method' that its relevance and validity are certain based on God. In

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fact, the criterion of all truth is based on God.

In Indian tradition, disciplines are usually placed in four categories as described by Kautilya in the fourth century BC – Trayī – Varta, Daṇḍanīti and Anvikṣiki, the science of the Vedas, rituals related to it, agriculture, animal husbandry, commerce and trade, politics, administration, justice; however, Daṇḍanīti and above that, the science which illuminates all disciplines. Evidence illuminates knowledge. Is Anvikṣiki only theoretical or is it beneficial for the people? **It keeps the intellect stable and makes a person adapt wisdom, and makes one proficient in words and actions. According to Kautilya, skill for intrigue is better; he who has the eye of knowledge and is acquainted with the science of polity can with little effort make use of his skill for intrigue and can succeed by means of conciliation and other strategic means and by spies and chemical appliances in over-reaching even those kings who are possessed of enthusiasm and power.**¹ Anvikṣiki provides a critical basis to all other subjects. This causal chain is determined in such a way that desire is determined by knowledge, effort by desire, action by effort and success or failure by action. Certainly, this concept presents the relation between a principle and an experiment as a simple natural relation. How can any civilization or its thinkers, especially philosophers, be called merely experimental or theoretical? As stated earlier, many scholars have not considered the Indian philosophical tradition as philosophical because, according to them, it is not motivated by the desire for pure knowledge. Its only aim is to achieve some other goal through knowledge such as mokṣa, nirvāna or apvarga.

Inference provides the basis for all sciences, and useful results are known in all the four disciplines. To say that science leaves some benefit or experimental effect does not reflect that science has a theoretical side too. In the long history of philosophy, we find many such examples where no incompatibility was felt between science and religion. It is said that John Locke, the pioneer of British empiricist philosophy and Newton, the great scholar of Physics, used to discuss the interpretation of the Bible. Locke is an empiricist and believes that science is capable of revealing the real nature of things. But the truth of the Bible is not affected. Berkeley connects all our experiences with the perception of God, and as far as Hume's doubt on God is concerned, that doubt destroys the possibility of the knower, the known, the cause and even the possibility of knowledge itself. **Edward has expressed his views in such a way that man suffers because of his sins, God is the liberator who liberates us from all sins, God is the abode of love and, the establishment of the world is possible only through such a God, such a God seems to be superior to the absolute.**²

There is no consensus on what is or should be included in religion. A significant number of thinkers believe that religion accepts the existence of God or some such superhuman power. Also, the idea of a person continuing in some form after death is accepted. Some code of conduct, some rituals, some books and some kind of personal relationship with God have been accepted in all religions around the globe irrespective of time. **The common-sense idea of the word is roughly this. The word is made up of or contains two radically different things: matter and mind. Matter is found in the physical objects around us and it always occupies space. It is governed by mechanical laws and specifically the laws of cause and effect. The mind is found in ourselves and very likely in some of the others animals. It is immaterial and not**

spatial. It is not bound by mechanical laws but is free to act as it will. If it submits to law at all, these are laws peculiar to it, and are not the same as the laws of nature.³

What objection can science have against religion? It is clear that in religion it is often believed that we will either accept its basic beliefs completely on the basis of faith or, in some other instances, we will take a leap of faith with limited evidence and accept religion with a subjective commitment. Science does not want to accept anything without testing it through experiment. Science requires questions, tests and objective criteria, and in such a situation it seems difficult to build a bridge between religion and science. Can the subjects of religion and science be completely separated? It is interesting that many scholars repeatedly tried to establish that the fields, subjects, nature and source of knowledge of religion and science are different.

The concept of 'language-game' and 'life form' given by Wittgenstein accepts the complete separation but proper validity of religion and science in this regard. Science and religion are two different worlds which are valid in their own way. According to Wittgenstein, the 'iron grip of Christianity' makes us feel very secure, but will religious people be satisfied with such a playful idea? If we look at religious texts, the discussions given in them give details about the ultimate elements of the world, the creation of the world and what is to be done and what is not to be done by humanity. How and why did God create the world? The description has been given differently in different religious books. The description given in the Bible and the Quran seems to be similar, but they are not consistent with Darwin's discovery. Which decisions can we take in the context of this question? Some philosophers have argued that we should not consider the Bible to be literally important, but we should see it as a symbolic, allegorical moral tale; in my opinion, a religious person will not accept it easily.

The other important question is also how we look at the evidence of a being like God through science. According to M. Kann Stevenson, the evidence of the existence of God is not relevant, because for religion it is not enough whether God exists or not? What is important for us is what our relationship with Him is? And what are our expectations from Him in conduct? This specific question is value-based and is not directly related to the factual existence of God. Kierkegaard talks about a soulful subjective relationship with God. Religion is mainly a pictorial description of a code of conduct. In such a situation, religion gets equated with morality, whose scope is mainly value-based. The aim of science is to attain truth, and its scope is factual. A number of analytical philosophers have even said that the aim of philosophy is to clarify the meaning of language. Can this idea be easily placed along with the discussions of theory and experiment in Indian thought? **The most striking fact about the world of human experience is the fact of change. Nothing stands still; everything goes on. The sun will someday lose its heat. The eternal hills are little by little breaking up and wearing away.**⁴

Was there science in India, and if yes, then what kind of science was it? The answer to those questions is positive, but some scholars, especially the supporters of colonialism, denied the Indian scientific tradition and instead claimed that science is a gift of Western civilisation and is primarily inspired by ancient Greek knowledge. But here we should ask, what is the relationship of modern science with Vedic and Chinese knowledge? Was only one period considered dark in the entire country? On this, there

is no consensus. The dominance of the European Christian Church and the influence of religious and armed forces of the invaders in India had pushed independent thinking into darkness. In the context of India, Advaita Vedānta thinking declares the world to be false. Indian caste traditions proved to be an obstacle in experimenting with marriage. The traditional understanding was that science did not progress here because of these reasons, but Prof. P.K. Mukhopadhyay rejects this view. In the context of theory and practicality, **Prof. J.N. Mohanty gives three arguments. According to them, Vatsyāyana and Gaṅgeśa take meaning as the object of knowledge and use it for that which fulfills, satisfies or hinders our purpose. 'Arthayate Asau' technically, the subject of knowledge is also the cause of happiness and sorrow. With this view, it has been said that no object is the object of knowledge until it produces happiness.**⁵ In this way, it cannot be said that, that which does not produce happiness and does not remove sorrow cannot be an object. Here, another principle related to meaning will also have to be looked at. From one point of view, there is no factual statement in Upaniṣads, nor is there any metaphysical statement in it. It only contains such orders as to what is to be done and what is not to be done? Thus, if the Arthasaṃgraha is valid, it will apparently make all discussions, whether theoretical or descriptive, experimental. Śaṅkarācārya opposes this type of thinking by differentiating between 'Artha and Brahman', and between 'Karma and Jñān'. 'Bhāvya' is not known at the time of knowledge; it is based on the efforts of the person who establishes it. On the contrary, Brahman is an established entity which is not based on anyone's efforts. According to Śaṅkarācārya, a person can be motivated to act and words themselves can act as motivation. Experience is not the source of knowledge in the context of what is to be done. Actions are based on the decision of the person but not the object. The perception of the object is based on the object. **In Mīmāṃsā philosophy, Dharma is considered as a policy, which can neither be seen nor experienced directly. The decision of Dharma should be based on such a basis, which does not confirm any kind of doubt. Where there is no need for any kind of amendment. Human life is not one-sided but it includes knowledge, feeling and action all three. Vedic mantras inspire us to perform religious deeds. Arṣa in Vedic laws is considered as Dharma.**⁶

Many philosophers believe that there is a relation between a factual sentence and the action inspired by it, but certainly the two are not the same. According to Mohanty, the success of truth can be tested in the action tendency. Most Indian philosophers have not considered this to be the nature of truth. Buddhist philosophers distinguish between two levels of truth. Only those who consider all conceptual linguistic cognitions to be false consider the distinction between these cognitions to be semantic and not factual. **Mohanty clarifies in his research paper that most of the Indian philosophy is theoretical, but it believes that the knowledge of truth is also beneficial in practical terms. Vedānta, Sāṃkhya and Buddhism generally believe that the knowledge of reality removes ignorance and removes suffering.**⁷ According to Mohanty, both conceptual and intuitive knowledge are theoretical, and there is a contradictory conclusion that purely theoretical knowledge provides us with the highest practical knowledge. Mohanty believes that the Hindu mind was constantly thinking theoretically about practice. The theoretical texts were written on the subjects of Dharma, Artha, Kāma, Mokṣa. Vatsyāyana's Kāmasūtra, Kautilya's Arthashastra,

Jaimini's Dharmaśāstra, Bādarāyana's Brahma Sūtras are examples of this. Theoretical thinking can be critical, and we can also call it dogmatic, where the description of virtues and duties is given directly. On the basis of caste, age and marital status, many rules of action are given in the religious scriptures. Apart from this, there is an example of critical thinking in the principle of practice.

How do we understand the words of scriptures? Is the meaning of words primary or the meaning of sentences? What is the relation between the meaning of the sentence and the implied meaning? If we are accepting the words of the authority for the validity of any knowledge, then what is the criterion for authority? We get different types of principles regarding the doable and the undoable. On one hand, the logicians claim that only those actions which bring happiness and remove sorrow are appropriate. In the Bhagavad Gītā, lord Kṛṣṇa considers those actions to be beneficial which are done as duty for the sake of duty without attachment. These principles are often compared with western philosophers like Mill and Kant. It is clear that diversity of thinking, diversity of principles, and diversity of experiments do not separate the Indian and western traditions. Indian philosophical traditions are experimentally transformative. Here, it is not meant to say that Indian principles are used, but the allegation is that they are not pure principles but experimental principles. In this view, modern science does not follow the ancient Greek Theoria, where, like Indian philosophy, contemplation of some unchangeable power is considered theoretical.

The real area of practice is the area of personal and social morality, which is the primary area of religion. Most philosophical thinking is based on the theoretical aspect of salvation, not on religion itself. According to Mohanty, Indian philosophy has accepted religion as a given and has not given much critical thought to it. In modern times, there is a need for epistemological, ethical, political and critical interpretation of religion. **When we study about religion in Mahābhārata, we get a universal definition based on moral background, Dharma is that which does not cause harm to anyone else. The one who follows religion only for himself or only for his own happiness, he remains untouched by the sunlight like a blind person.**⁸ What is Dharma according to Mohanty? And how can it be known? Dharma is neither perceptible nor can be known by inference. Hence its only source is the word. Mohanty believes that Indian thought is head-to-head with the same western thought, which claims that the claims of duty are neither perceptible as facts nor can be deduced from them. When we hear that we have to do this, then only we understand that we have to do this, which we assume on the basis of the speaker being moral, intellectual and credible. Mohanty presents an interesting view on the moral criticism of the principle of religion in the context of Hegel, Gadamer, etc. The moral criticism of tradition assumes that we have a broad view which is independent of all traditions and whose criticism can be internal as well as external. While studying ancient culture in many contexts, it becomes difficult to find concepts like religion, science, justice, and individual consciousness which are abundant in Indian tradition. Although the way we have been discussing the image of an ancient spiritual India, similarly we can also reconstruct the ancient spiritual tradition of a scientific India. At a certain point, the challenges of choice and personal insistence will remain on this as well, as science cannot be found in some scattered statements, inscriptions and tools. It is a behaviour linked to feelings, dreams and aspirations. In Hindu ethics, religion has been given a

lot of importance. Only a regular, restrained and sātvik life is religious and best. In fact, religion is the guide for the code of conduct and behaviour of a moral person. **Through which he executes his deeds according to the country and time. Good conduct is considered to be the characteristics of religion and the result of religion comes from moral conduct.**⁹

Talking about the spiritual glory of India, some social reforms did take place in the 19th and 20th centuries, but apart from Gandhi, no great social spiritual collective upliftment can be seen. It is a fact that the people of present India are living in a scientific culture. Its history must have been with many types of ideologies and social thinking. The meaning of calling Indian culture scientific is that it separates us from ungrounded ideas like mysticism, irrationality, faith and superstition. Science sets the standards of theoretical and experimental rationality. Philosophy and science are slightly opposed in this manner. This way of thinking is a gift of Western modernity. During the freedom struggle, some scholars were busy glorifying Indian culture without sufficient research, just like William Jones, Hegel, Marcus and James Mill before them. Without sufficient research, they were busy calling Indian civilization fundamentally unintellectual. Indians and other people of the world were convinced that Indian culture is spiritual, but in believing so, they forgot that we are considering India and its citizens unscientific and unintellectual. The British, German, French, and their Indian followers had accepted this picture. **Psychologically it is always within a context in which one mental process is the meaning of another mental process. Context in this sense is simply the mental process which accredits the given process through the situation if it is the physical as external.**¹⁰

To make Indians cultured, they will have to be freed from traditional education and separated from Sanskrit schools, which will have useful sciences like chemistry, mathematics, and physiology. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a strong supporter of this. It is clear that materialism also came along with Western sciences. Indians themselves considered their tradition to be shallow. It is interesting that Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who considered Sanskrit education as a hindrance to Indian culture, himself established Vedanta College. The religious history of Europe has been opposed to science and independent thinking, and this is why the modern West has strongly attacked religion in its thinking. But the tradition of Indian history cannot be kept in this simple framework. The West has never acknowledged the contribution of India or any other Asian country to science. It does not express sufficient gratitude to the Greek and Roman civilizations either. Indians have also accepted this view of the West. According to P.K. Mukhopadhyay, the idea of considering religion as anti-science is Western. Despite the devastation of two world wars, western scholars do not re-examine their beliefs. **We will have to redefine the idea of cultural-spiritual India and scientific-modern culture of the West. This is an important mistake, which is one-sided, based on insufficient research and is inspired by political hegemony.**¹¹ Science-centric Western philosophy was also limited to a great extent; logical emotivism is an example of this. The current discussions inspire multilingual, multicultural and rereading of traditions.

Conclusion

We can move in a meaningful direction by keeping the small and big traditions in the context of place, time, caste, and gender so that we can arrive at meaningful

cooperation. Therefore, it can be said that the interrelationship between religion and science is based on a psychological basis because without each other we can never keep faith or logic in a separate way. Science is organised in an organized systematic way. Similarly, a concept that understands the impulses of our mind, which we call psychology, is equally useful for us, and we can decide our thoughts according to psychology. No dogmatic claim of the ultimate truth, religious violence and the development and progress of scientific and technical weapons, completely neutral to moral questions, have today brought us to a situation of destruction of the world. In this short paper, I have tried to show that we humbly need some more sensitive study and research, which can lead us away from conflicts and towards harmony and cordiality.

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