GLOBALIZATION & THE NEED OF INDIAN INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS

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ABSTRACT:

Due to the huge technological progress, all communities are under the one and only one—world community, which is known as 'Global Village.' A community is measured today by its technological progress instead of its socio-cultural history or philosophical background. Now, a serious question may be raised: How does a community survive, maintaining its own identification characteristics after being an automatic member of the world community or 'Global Village'? Because, in a community each and every primary interests of an individual community must be assured, otherwise it cannot be regarded as a community at all.

In general, a nation of this planet may take the decision that they avoid any kind of modern amenities and keep themselves be happy with the limited natural resources, got from the nature. But some communities of south pacific nation are ceased to be exist due to the rising of sea level caused by radical climate change which are the byproduct of the fulfillment of unlimited greed of other nation based on technological growth.

Thus, a new type of problem has been knocking at the door in this age of Globalization which is concerned with the existence of some communities in the 'Global Village'. This paper will be an approach to discuss the problem in detail and the possible clue to solve the problem from the fundamental principles of Indian intellectual traditions.

Key words: Community, Global Village, Climate, Unlimited Greed.

The expression 'Global Village' is very familiar to us. It's simple meaning—the whole world has been placed under the one and only one titanic umbrella. Due to the huge technological progress the world community as a whole is now named as 'Global Village', because a community is now measured by its technological progress instead of its socio-cultural background and wealth as only technological progress is regarded to be the demarcation of Globalization. The famous Bengali scientist of this time *Dr. Mani Bhaumik* said,

"সমকালীন প্রগতির বৈশিষ্ট্য এই ভাবনার মধ্যে, আমরা সবাই এক আন্তর্জাতিক টেকনোলজিকাল সমাজের সতীর্থ। আমরা বিশ্বায়ন ও সভ্যতার এই উজ্জ্বল পর্যায়ে পৌঁছেছি বিজ্ঞানের সৌজন্যে।"[i] (The characteristics of contemporary progress lies in this thought that we are the individual members of one and only one technological community. We have reached in this brilliant stage of Globalization and culture for the enormous progress of science.)

One may raise a question like this: How does one community become the member of another community? The possible answer may be given from the notion of set in logic.

It is supposed that B is a set representing the Bengali community. Mr. X is the only member of the set B i.e. Set B = {X}. A set may be a member of another set i.e. in another community. The community of Bengali may be a community of Indian i.e. Set I = {{X}}. If the global community is marked as the Set G then the set theoretical notation of Set G = {{{X}}}.

Another important point is this— in a community each and every primary interests of an individual must be assured otherwise it cannot be regarded as a community at all. For example:

(i)   In a festival like *Durga Puja* or *Diwali* or *Id-Ul-Fetar* a poor person may bring low priced dresses to his family, but enjoy the maximum amount of happiness and it is guaranteed by the community.

(ii)   A poor person also buys low priced particle chicken instead of mutton but he is free to enjoy the maximum amount of taste and it is also guaranteed by the community.

(iii)   Similarly when communities itself become an individual, the community as a whole that is the country must assure their primitive interests. For example: *Santal*, *Koal*, *Vil*, *Munda*, *Jaroas* etc. in India can live freely in this country.

Now, the point is, when the whole world becomes one and only one community, 'Is it possible to assure the guaranty that the primary interests of each and every individual member of that community be remained

unharmed?' Thus, a new type of problem has been knocking at the door in this age of Globalization which is concerned with the relation between individuality, identity, community and globalization.

This paper will be an approach to discuss the above mentioned problems in detail and the possible clue to solve the problem from the fundamental principles of Indian intellectual traditions.

Identity is one of the determinate factors of social cohesion. Individuals usually tend to identify themselves with the social groups of which they are members. An individual may side with a social group of which he is a member for a right or wrong cause; there is a great deal of truth in the old saying that, "birds of the same feather flock together". Identity is also treated as one of the prime sources of communal feeling. Member of communal group have typical attitudes. It is on account of certain typical attitudes that individual's identity themselves with others of certain communal group. In *shastra* it is said that:

> *Ya ēkō varnō bahudhā ṣaktiyogāt*
> *Varṇān aṇēkān nihitārthō dadhāti.*
> *Vichaiti chāntē viṣvamādau sa dēvaḥ*
> *Sa nō buddhyā ṣubhyā samyunaktu.*

He who is one, and who dispenses the inherent needs of all peoples and all times, who is in the beginning and the end of all things, may be unite us with the bond of truth, of common fellowship, of righteousness.

One point should be noted here that in a community the most important point is the security of the identity of an individual. Is global community guaranty the identity of an Individual?—is the question of million dollars.

A nation of this planet may take the decision that they would avoid any kind of modern amenities and keep themselves be happy with the limited natural resources which they have got from the nature. For example, in our society there are many communities (*Birhar* in West Bengal, *Jaroas* in Andaman) who have been living happily from the long past by their limited number of facilities which they have got from nature as natural resources. At present in this age of Globalization, it is difficult for them to continue their own peace full livelihood. They fail to become accustomed to technology based civilization which is the indication that they are compelled to keep up their aboriginal tradition. The result is identity crisis.

It is no doubt that the enormous technological growth gives us all kinds of happiness for some limited community but at the same time it is also the cause of the loss of identity of some community with the community as a whole i.e. with the 'Global Village'. In this age of Globalization, a whole nation may be the victim of identity crisis. We

are all aware about the problem of radical climate change. In Hindu Ethics, the law of karma (*Ṛta)* is regarded as fundamental of morality. The law of karma does not allow one in getting the result of action done by another one. One has to carry out the result for his own action. Surprisingly, the problem of radical climate change does not allow any kind of moral law of karma. Some people have been suffering a lot although they are not themselves are cause of their suffering. In other words, it may be said that they have been suffered due to the fulfillment greed desires of others!

For this reason, **Bikenibeu Paeniu, Prime Minister, Tuvalu, a South Pacific nation** in his presentation on EPLD, Brisbane, 29 June 2006 appealed to the whole world that:

 I am not a scientist nor is an expert on Climate Change but I am a citizen of the world, a long serving political leader of my nation whom, among many other leaders in their own respective rights, was bestowed the holy responsibility to fight the cause of climate change to bring justice to the planet earth that is constantly being damaged as a result of human greed.

Before going to the discussion on how the above mentioned current problems can be solved, let us peep into some characteristics of the fundamental principles of Indian intellectual traditions. These are so valuable, heterogeneous and voluminous that it is very hard to make a short list. It is like a task to find out the needle from the heaps of hays. In this respect we should also keep in mind that Indian intellectual ethnicities have sometimes not only been misinterpreted but also been criticized in the ground that there were no solid scientific basis behind our power full rational thinking.

But this criticism cannot last longer because the time has been changed and the approaches have also been changed. At the beginning, by the term science, what we mean was to designate only those subjects which were directly based on Mathematics. But today, those subjects which are not directly related with Mathematics are also called science (social sciences for example). In recent time, some scientists (Dr. Mani Bhaumik, Max Plank, Rojer Penroje) are also raise question like this:

Why science does not make any enquiry about the spiritual matter?

In the history of Philosophy, it has been observed that Descartes was the first person who made the distinction between body i.e. matter and mind i.e. soul. From then, it seems to be a tradition that the subject matter of science must be confined into the matter because only matters are the subject of measurement. Dr. *Mani Bhaumik* remarked,

তিনশো বছরেরও বেশী সময় ধরে মহাবিশ্বে চেতনা ছিলো রিফিউজির মতো। (Conscious had been treated as refugees for more than three hundred years.)[ii]

What is interesting to note here, the Indian sages used to think that there was no contradiction between spirituality and corporeality. It is possible to explain the first cause of universe through both the ways.

From the standpoint of the philosophy of Sri *Aurobinda* it can be said that,

The inevitable result of separating Matter from Spirit is, as Sri Aurobinda points out, to force us to make a choice between the two. This is, in fact, what we actually notice in the history of human thought. Either Spirit has been denied as an illusion of the imagination or Matter has been denied as an illusion of the senses. The result is either "a great bankruptcy of Life" or "an equal bankruptcy in the things of the Spirit."[i]

Keeping in mind, the points mentioned above, it should be noted that huge technological growth is the mark of pure science or corporeality or matter. If this huge technological growth is taken as the only criterion of development then it is possible for us to get maximum amount of happiness. Getting maximum amount of happiness is not the ultimate destination of human life; it is a trap of unlimited greed fullness. The ultimate destinations of human life are

(i)   to overcome oneself from unlimited greed

(ii)   to give the honour of a man by other man

(iii)   to become a man

(iv)   to attain peace.

If the ultimate destinations of life are realized then there would be no provision of the crisis of identity of a person or of a community or of a nation. Technological help must be availed, but anti-humanity technological development must be stopped and/or redundant. This standpoint is also the clue of solving the above mentioned problem.

Let us take some examples from our great intellectual traditions through which the clue can be supported. The *Upanishad* tells us the way how to control the unlimited greed and to give the honour not only the human being but also the other than non-human animate and non-animate being. For this reason, perhaps, the *Isa-upanishad* begins with the following sutra:

ईशावास्यमिदम्सर्वं
यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत्
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा
मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धनम्

īśāvāsyam idam sarvaṁ yat kiñca jagatāṁ jagat

tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdḥ kasya svid dhanam.

īśā—by the Lord; *vāsyam—controlled; idam—this; sarvaṁ —all; yat—whatever; kiñ—it* (is); *ca—and; jagatāṁ —within* the universe; *jagat—all* that is animate or inanimate;*tena—by* Him; *tyaktena—set* apart quota; *bhuñjīthā —must* you accept; *mā —do* not; *gṛdḥ —make* into use; *kasya svid—whom* does it belong; *dhanam—things* necessary.

TRANSLATION

Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one must not accept other things, knowing well to Whom they belong.[ii]

We cover all things with the lord by perceiving the Devine Presence everywhere. When the consciousness is firmly fixed in God, the conception of diversity naturally drops away, because the one cosmic existence shines through all things. As we gain the light of wisdom, we cease to cling to the unrealities of the world, and we find all our joy in the realm of Reality.

The word 'enjoy' is also interpreted by the great commentator Sankarāchārya as "protect" because knowledge our true Self is the greatest protector and sustainer. If we do not have this knowledge, we cannot be happy; because nothing on this external plane of phenomena is permanent or dependable. He who is rich in the knowledge in the Self does not covet external power or possession.[iii]

Our śāstrakāras were also the part of the fixation of the destinations of human life. Their prime duty of life was to help the man in such way that they could become a man with the help of *dharma*. Thus we find,

Āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maiythunanca sāmānyametat paśubhirnarānāṃ |

Dharma hi teṣāṃ adhiko viśeṣo dharmrṇo hināḥ paśubhiḥ samānaḥ ||

The intention of the speaker in the above verse is to emphasize the truth that a man cannot be distinguished from animals in respect to any of these four properties of *āhāra* (taking food), *nidrā* (having a sound sleep) *bhaya* (being afraid of something or someone) *maiythuna* (sexual gratification for the preservation of race); for these are common to both animals and men. What differentiates a man from animals is really the possession of dharma— the special *(viśeṣa) and* additional (*adhika*) feature in man—without which a man is but equal to an animal.

Someone may say that reason makes the difference between an animal and a man. But if this is true, then there would be no sign of:

i)   terrorist activities in the world

ii)   buttering one's own bread at the cost of millions

iii)   taking bribe

iv)   doing harm to anybody

v)   acting as unaware of environmental crisis for present pleasure

More often than not we look upon an inhuman treatment as *pāśvik atyācār,* oppression comparable with beasts. But it is believed that if animals could protest, they would surely have joined issue with us. The animals take resort to violent means only out of fear, anger or hunger. But we people commit sin even in a cold-blooded manner.

Now the important point is what is *dharma*? As the etymology suggests (dhṛ + man), *dharma* is that property in the presence of which man becomes a man and in the absence of which man is not a man i.e. cannot be called a man. When, for example, a man quarrels with another and uses abusive language, we say that he is behaving like a dog. A man may be educated, but if he fails to behave sympathetically with his fellow beings and deprives them their duties, we say that he is *amānuṣ* i.e. not possessing the qualities of man. A man is thus not born, but made. It is not truly his physical appearance that characterizes him properly what he is. It is rather his achievement, his attainment that makes him a man proper. That is why *Swami Vivekananda* exclaims: "Man-making is my mission."For 'man-making' *Swamiji* emphasizes the role of 'character-building'. When you build up your character, you not only become a man yourself but also become able to make another man. That is why *Swamiji's* clarion calls: 'Be and make'. *Sri Ramkrishna*, the spiritual designer and moulder of *Swamiji Vivekananda*, used to say: *mon mukh ek karai dharma.*That is to say, to do one think another is not a *dharma. Dharma* on the contrary, consists in a harmony or unity between what one says and what one does. To the insightful vision of *Sri Ramkrishna*, A man is one who is conscious of his own standard, his own ideal—*mān samparke hunsh mānuṣ.*

Let us now turn to the teaching of *śāstras* which a man sets before himself in order to become a man proper—his *dharmas*. To the vision of our truth-seers the following five properties at least need to be cultivated in order that one attains *dharma*. These are:

Ahiṁsā satyaṁ asteyaṁ ṣaucaṃ saṁyameva ca|

Etat sāmāsikaṃ proktaṁ dharmasya lakṣanaṃ||

Ahiṁsā means absence of doing harm to anybody always and everywhere. *Mā hiṃsāt sarva bhûtāni.* It is not merely enough that we desist from hurting anybody physically. It is also necessary that we do not even think of doing any harm to anybody mentally as well. Not to commit violence at any time or anybody either physically or mentally is the negative aspect of a*hiṁsā.* Positively, a*hiṁsā* stands for love, kindness, fellow-feeling and the like. To respect another human being, to have reverence for all, is a*hiṁsā.*

Satya stand for agreement or parity between words and deeds. Even if the words correspond to reality and meaning but the intention of speaker is otherwise, it is to be taken as *mithyā* or false wood. Thus the expression *'Asvatthama hata iti gajaḥ',* though true factually, cannot be taken to be true, as the intention of the speaker being otherwise. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that to be uniform in mind and speech is *dharma* and this *dharma* is *satya*. Mahatma Ghandhi also used to say: 'Truth is God, God is Truth'. The seers and sages also salute truth by saying, '*Satyaṁ paraṃ dhimahi'.* In the *Mundaka śruti* also we find, '*Satyamave jayate nānṛtaṃ'*. In the Upanishads it is exclaimed: *Satyaṁ jñānaṃ anantaṁ Brahman.* All these point to the fact that taking resort to *satya* is essential. That is why the first lesson, imparted to a disciple by a teacher in *Acāryapadeśa*, is *satyaṃ vada*—speak the truth.

Next come **asteya** or non-stealing. In *Yoga* philosophy it is stated that attachment to articles belonging to others, in mind, speech and deed is the essence of *asteya*. In his commentary Praśtapāda also points out that asteya does not merely mean refraining outwardly from stealing. It consists also in resolving internally the disapproval of all acts of misappropriation as immoral. Our truth-seer *sastrakaras* go to the length of suggesting that nor repaying one's debt or fulfilling one's obligations is also stealing. They point out that a man is born with five kinds if debts *(ṛna)*, viz, *bhûta ṛna (*debts to subhuman beings), *ṇṛna* (debts to society), *pitṛ-matṛ ṛna* (debts to our parent), *ṛṣi ṛṇa* (debts to seers and sages from whom we have inherited our culture) and *deva ṛṇa* (debts to Gods). Only by acknowledging our indebtedness to them and serving them in right earnest can we try to repay at least partially.

Śauca which is placed under *niyama* stands for purity both of body and mind. External purity of body can be had through bathing etc. Internal purification of mind can be obtained only through good thoughts, thoughts of well-

beings to others. This is why so much importance is attached to *sadhu sanga* in our scriptures. When one attains *bāhya śauca* one become averse not only to one's own body but also to other bodies, especially those of women resulting in the absence of desire for mating. *Āntara śauca* leads one to the intrinsic pleasure and bliss of mind resulting in the conquest of sense organs, mastery over them and concentration of mind.

By *saṁyama* is usually meant to keep in control the power of different sense organs, especially the *janendriya*—the sex organs. In *Manusaṃhitā* this is known as *indriyanigraha.* One who has mastered the art of controlling one's passion like *kāma* (last), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed) etc. is to be regarded as one who has attained *saṁyama.* This is why the students in the olden days were sent to the house of a preceptor to practice *bramhacarya*. When one gets firmly rooted in *saṁyama* one attains the ultimate goal of life, i.e., *ātmasākṣātkāra*. Reality gets revealed to him and he becomes *mukta* being one with God.

Thus we see how Indian intellectual traditions tell us the way how to attain the ultimate destinations of human life and to get peace with the path of *ahiṁsā, satya asteya, ṣauca* and *saṁya.* If this are followed then there would be no problem of identity crisis among the individual or community or nation.

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