Buddhist Psychological Implications on Human Moral Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Buddhism is concerned, the question as in what mental conditions one really experiences a moral question or a dilemma, is of greater importance (instead of putting the questions straight forward as what is good or what is not good). It is because only in the context of the origin of the question the nature of the responses towards the modalities of moral thinking is to be understood. Therefore, the direction of moral inquiry would shift to a psychological examination of human experience of pain and pleasure, virtue and vice, and relevant mental states. The standard of moral living has to be based upon the findings of the causal structure of the psycho-genesis of these mental states accordingly. Perhaps, then, we may not be able to delineate a sui generis theory of moral philosophy but we can very well lay down necessary description upon which moral decision can be made. The Buddhist approach of moral psychology is a kind of intelligent and sensitive occasionalism as a blueprint of human mental states, its inner and external pressures, liking and disliking determining one is intention cannot be made in advance. To choose a right action one needs to be always aware of one is intention of the preconditions of one is own mind. Such an approach can be universalized provided that there is a mass level effort for the uplifting of human moral consciousness.

INTRODUCTION

The writers of Indian philosophies of post-colonial period that adequate consideration was never given by Indian philosophers to the formulation of moral principles that one can accurately call ethic[1] In this paper we do not intend to grapple with such observations or charges. At the same time, the paper envisages three alternative views as possible responses to the above observation: (i) some disciplines other than philosophy, such as spirituality or law, engaged with moral questions. (ii) Morality can be dealt with, at least, in two ways) by constructing a theory formulating basic principles to respond to moral questions, and b) by taking recourse to the underpinned epistemology of a philosophical system which has sufficient potential to address the moral questions when needed. The point (ii) b is part of 'moral epistemology' which none of the Indian philosophical systems is deprived of. (iii) Some of very prominent systems of Indian philosophies (such as Buddhism) are more interested in laying down the description of human behaviour upon which morality can actually be based. Such attempts form 'moral psychology' which is more fundamental to ethical enterprise.[2]

Buddhism is concerned, the question as in what mental conditions one really experiences a moral question or a dilemma, is of greater importance (instead of putting the questions straight forward as what is good or what is not good). It is because only in the context of the origin of the question the nature of the responses towards the modalities of moral thinking is to be understood. Therefore, the direction of moral inquiry would shift to a psychological examination of human experience of pain and pleasure, virtue and vice, and relevant mental states. The standard of moral living has to be based upon the findings of the causal structure of the psycho-genesis of these mental states accordingly. Perhaps, then, we may not be able to delineate a sui generis theory of moral philosophy but we can very well lay down necessary description upon which

[1].Matilal, B.K. (ed). *Jonardon Ganeri*, Vol. I, *Ethics and Epics* Oxford University Press, Delhi: 2000), p. 21.

[2]. Donald M. Borchert (ed.), *Philosophy and Ethics*: Selections from *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy and Supplement*, Macmillan Library, New York, 1999, p. 680.

moral decision can be made.[3] Moreover, a moral standard or criterion is essential to lead a moral life, to evaluate human conduct and to give moral judgments. An 'ideal', a value or 'belief' (whatsoever humane and glorified it may be) cannot serve the purpose of the said criterion because such ideals would require factual (empirical) verification.

Accordingly, the assumption a moral standard must be based upon a first-hand descriptive moral episteme duly verifiable in the empirical realm can be taken as the first premise for the present discourse. Here, the empirical may include not only the sense data but also the so-called subjective (inner) experiences, which according to Buddhism do not occur random. They rather have unique causal structure (hetu-pratyaya) and accordingly yield output in terms of behavioural patterns. The said experiences may be subjective but their having a causal structure allows an objective study of it. Of course, then, one requires a compatible method of knowing the causal structure, i.e., an introspective method. The application of the method presupposes that the unconscious can be brought to the realm of the conscious. Therefore, the assumptions that there is no permanent divide between the conscious and unconscious and, hence, the unconscious can be brought to the domain of the empirical which may in turn add to understanding our conduct in totality. This is taken as the second premise. The further discourse on the Buddha is moral psychoanalysis would be based upon these two premises.

The Ethical Foundations of Buddhism

The Buddha is ethical foundation is based upon some basic points of departure such as ethics has no necessary relation with metaphysics. Rather, elimination of metaphysics is a necessary ground for authentic and virtuous life. The Buddha is ethical formulation is based upon three main principles that are: principle of causation (dependent origination), impermanence and the principle of non-self. These principles themselves are causally inferable from the assumption of causation itself. To illustrate, if we do not assume causation nothing can be made intelligible, and if we assume that everything arises due to some cause would imply impermanence as per the philosophical logic of the system. If, whatever is caused is impermanent, then we cannot identify ourselves with anything that we can call 'self.' As Damien Keown points out, the Buddha was the first to unravel the skein of false consciousness within which the notions of permanence and selfhood were fostered. The theory of the skandhas was the first step in this process of critical analysis, exposing the illusory 'self' as a projection onto these underlying mental and physical aggregates. The categories of the Abhidharma, which are essentially based on the skandhas, represent the continuation of the analytical critique and an extension of its application beyond the human subject to reality as a whole.[4]

Moral consciousness is (though not innate to human nature) part and parcel of the human psychodynamics provided the concealing factors of the consciousness (åcchådana or nivarana of citta) the malevolent intentions (the akusala) is removed. Further, in the Buddha is formulation of ethics, ethics occupies a teleological nature. The cessation of suffering is the only and ultimate goal the telosend of the system. Generally, in Indian idealistic ethics, we witness a thorough delinking of action from the summum bonum of life, i.e., the ultimate goal of life (liberation) cannot be achieved through action. But, for the Buddha the virtuous actions (moral conduct and refraining from the non-virtuous acts) enjoy the status of morally commendable and constitute the la part of his ethical program. In his broader classification of ethical programme, i.e.,sila, samådhi and prajnå (which can be called the Buddhist cardinal virtues), the latter two cannot be achieved unless the former flawlessly mastered. In his scheme of psychoanalysis the Four Noble Truths and the ethical programme is causally explained. Through his exposition of principle of causation the Buddha not only describes the psychogenesis of human suffering (paticcasamuppåda in Påli; pratityasamutpåda in Sanskrit) but also draws a path for the annihilation of suffering without violating the causal principle (rather taking advantage of it).

[3] Donald M. Borchert (ed.), *Philosophy and Ethics*: Selections from *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy and Supplement*, Macmillan Library, New York, 1999, pp. 685-686.

[4] Damien Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics* Macmillan, New York: 1992), p. 58.

In his Noble Eightfold Path, the first component of the sammå ditthi, describes the sources of virtues and miseries (kusala-mula and akusala-mula) which are deeply rooted in the unconscious. To understand the causality of the unconscious, a compatible psychoanalysis is warranted which it prefer calling psycho-causal-analysis. The reason is that the modern psychology has often expressed doubts about the causal sequencing of the development of the unconscious.5 It also raises doubts about the rational of the unconscious, as Ian Craib notes,[5] the unconscious is timeless. It does not develop or change; it does not mature, although if we are lucky the rest of our psychic apparatus does change, becoming more complex and handling the unconscious impulses in more creative ways.[6] Such types of apprehensions may give rise to some possible obstacles and charges as following and that need to be addressed at the outset.

Psychological Behaviour of Limitations

The project of moral psychoanalysis, it is required to respond to the possible behaviourist is question. The behaviourist approach,[7] which emphasizes only the behavioural aspect of human being and dismisses the inner or mental procedural aspects, is likely to be rejected by the present discourse. The behaviourists in general make a programme of formulating theories of interaction between stimuli and responses on the basis of stimulus generalization. For them, external stimuli are input variables and behavioural responses are output variables. A radical behaviourist like B.F. Skinner[8] holds the environmental factors directly responsible for individual's behavioural responses and precludes inner processes, not that they do not exist, but that they are not relevant 8 to the prediction, control, and experimental analysis of behaviour.

The paper tends to show that stimulus generalization cannot be taken as a proper method of understanding mental functions as it is possible that a particular external dispositions of behaviour is caused by different mental states or intensions, and vice versa, a particular mental state may yield different behavioural disposition (different with reference to time, type and mental formations or states). On this account, it can be explained as why in apparently similar situation the responses of different persons or, the same person's response at different occasions, vary. In other words, responses cannot be explained from the side of stimuli alone, rather it should be explained from the side of inner mental states. Inner mental states or the psychic facts shape the complex concrete behaviour such as speech act, motor effects, etc., which are the end results of the inner shaping. The behaviourist's presumption that the molecular psychic function is too far removed from our experiential capacities needs to be re-examined, because such a presumption would suspend the possibility of a meaningful behavioural analysis. By a meaningful behavioural analysis its mean when one can successfully (or at least in principle) take recourse to certain mental causes for explanation of one's conduct for which one can be held responsible. Otherwise, human action will be a mere reaction to environment an accident, and left to mere chance. In this case, no moral discourse can take place. If it is argued from the behaviourist side that the external/environmental factors affect human conduct, then the conduct of a person who commits a crime would be termed as compelled by situation or the natural reaction of human being. In such case, the responsibility of the person cannot be fixed and, hence, no theory of punishment can be meaningfully talked about. If certain pattern of reaction is defined as human nature, it can then be argued that one commits a crime under certain circumstances and, hence, if there is prevalence of those circumstances, the corollary will be the same.

Psychological Potentiality of the Behaviour

The famous psychologist, Gottlob Frege denies that prescriptions based on psychological laws can qualify as proper logical laws. Such prescriptions can be no more than demands to confirm to current thinking habits. But, such philosophical positions, perhaps, lack a suitable measure to evaluate the facticity of psychic facts. It is difficult to maintain the concepts like 'truth' independent of psychology. One's decision about

[5] Ian Craib, *Psychoanalysis: A Critical Introduction* Polity Press, Cambridge: 2001, pp. 22-23.

[6] Ian Craib, *Psychoanalysis: A Critical Introduction* Polity Press, Cambridge: 2001, p. 24.

[7] Zurrif, G. E. *Behaviorism: A Conceptual Reconstruction*, Columbia University Press, New York: 1985, p. 80.

[8]Skinner, B.F. *Science and Human Behavior*,, Macmillan, New York: 1953, p.34

something as concept or as object is also a psychological decision. The difficulty with some philosophers is that if one lays emphasis upon human conditions of knowing rather than the objective conditions (object independent of cognition), one would be treated as a subjective idealist. The issue is not whether anything exists independent of mind, but nothing can acquire cognitive status independent of mind. What cannot acquire cognitive status cannot be meaningfully talked about. Our engagement with the concept of truth has been one such case. One feels that there can be truth independent of psychology as Frege once held.[9] Such convictions have evaded psychoanalysis.

Similarly, Edmund Husserl presumed psychological laws as vague. His arguments against psychologism are centred to the belief that logical laws do not refer to psychological entities,[10] which is surprising. Every logical decision is justified only on account of their appeal to human cognitive faculty (such as law of identity or contradiction). Therefore, a one-to-one causal mapping of relation between mental states and rational decisions or behavioural expressions is possible. So, taking recourse to psychology for interpretation of such decisions or expressions may not necessarily be treated as psychologism. Psychic facts and objects cannot be seen as two segments since the procedure of experiencing (cognizing) the two are not radically different. The object-hood of an object is rather transitional with reference to the reference-point of their experiencing.

My intention here is not to go into the intricacies of these debates, but we just needed to indicate that above doubts may arise and gave reasons why we chose a by-pass to avoid above predicaments. In course of the further discussion, the reader will find some grounds for overlooking the above debates as their being not so relevant in the context.

Buddhism and Psycho-Causal System

The Buddha is insight into the understanding of mind (through the principle of dependent origination Paticcasamuppåda) can be of great help to evolve a comprehensive method of psychoanalysis. The Buddha is analysis, of course, asserts a method of knowing the inner procedures of mind. An introspective method is often believed to be something a-rational, extra-ordinary or other mode of knowing. The received understanding about such method is that it cannot be universalized, as being intuitive it can at the best reveal subjective feelings, psychic facts, and alike. The best resolve in this regard is that even in case of ordinary perception it requires the involvement of consciousness. If knowing is a conscious act, then knowing an objective fact and a psychic fact may have a common generic structure. They cannot be to general different from each other. Introspective methods intend to suspension of the preoccupations of mind with sensory objects so as to enable it to be aware of the inner facts.

The Buddhist Påli canons give detailed and sequenced account of inner precursors determining human behaviour. Behavioural expressions such as speech act (våk-samskåra), motor effect (kåyasamskåra) have mental associations (åsrava) as their precursors. The åsrava like kåma-åsrava, bhava-åsrava and avidyå-åsrava; are caused by 'inappropriate attention' or 'inappropriate grasping' (ayoniso manasikåro)[11] - contemplation of or engaging mind into unrighteous psychic function. It would be interesting to notice the Buddha's schema of presentation of the whole issue. The causal structure right from input variables to the output variables suggests how mental faculties get activated and a mental state gets translated into a behavioural expression. The Buddha describes[12] as the initial input (a sensation in this context) received in the given environment is often the auditory perception (in a naturalistic human environment ñ

[9] Frege, G. Grundgesetze der Arithmetik: Begriffsschriftlich Abgeleitet, Vol. 1 (Jena: Hermann Pohle, 1893).

[10]Katz, J.J.. *Language and Other Abstract Objects*, Rowman and Littlefield, Totawa, New.Jersy. 1981, p. 175.

[11]Majjhima-Nikåya, 1/1/2, sabb,sava-sutta, trans. in Hindi by Pt. Rahula Sankrityayana, 1933 (Saranath, Varanasi: Mahabodhi Sabha, 1964, pp. 6-7.

[12] Angutara-Nikaya: Anguttara-Nikåya-Påli, (ed). Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Vol. 4, Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2002. Pp. 63-68.

asappurisasevano, asaddhammasavanam), which activates other sense-perceptions too; that gives rise to the formation of inappropriate beliefs, concepts, ideas, images (assaddhiyam), etc.

These psychic episodes after getting mixed with other psychic episodes result into a complex behaviour. That is to say, a behavioral response is a constitution of multiple psychic episodes. If one attends to these improperly, they would result into the loss of awareness about the very nature of their content or referent (i.e., what they represent). This improper grasping - ayoniso manasikåro - yields concealment of awareness (asatåsammpajao). The inappropriate attention or grasping can be taken as emotional dysfunction. The contents of the initial input ñ the auditory perception, are prone to undergo ayoniso manasikåro, because they are received in a naturalistic environment (of people and interpersonal relationship); and also because they have already attracted formation of other psychic facts too (which are present in the mind in advance). The naturalistic process of receiving incessant inputs, multiple images are formed through the impression resulted by the input, leading to 'sedimentation' of impressions further constituting the so-called 'unconscious' (here, avijjå).

In the Buddhist sense, the unconscious is to be understood as awareness about which (realm of manasikara) is concealed by the current preoccupation of mental contents or grasping. This unconscious is in fact called avijjå (ignorance). The concealment of awareness gives rise to loss of control over senses and motor effects (indriya asamvaram). The 'unconscious' is not totally dormant, rather is under processing and keeps on affecting the behavioural output. Loss of such control is the cause of the behavioural disorder (tini duccaritåni); that is, three types of misconduct association, aversion and delusion at mental level; inadequacy of speech act at speech level; and stealing, violence, non-chastity, etc., at physical level. These behavioural disorders strengthen the five fundamental miseries (panca-nivarana).[13] A mental state overpowered by these miseries is the state of ignorance (avijjå). The Buddha calls the process as the process of nourishing (åhåro) of ignorance. The above analysis can be put as under: The naturalistic environment í sensory inputs from the environment naturalistic beliefs í inappropriate attention and mental processing í concealment of awareness í loss of control over motor effects we behavioural dysfunction further defilement of consciousness í further addition to ignorance.

On account of the fundamental framework of processing of input variables received in form of auditory perception in a naturalistic environment, the output variables can be understood properly. The Samyukta Nikåya gives another detailed description of ayoniso manasikåro as source of fundamental miseries.[14] It is because of inappropriate attention the un-arisen libido (kåmacchando) arises, un-arisen aggression (byåpådo, which causes violent behaviour) arises, un-arisen ennui (thinamiddham) arises, un-arisen restiveness (uddhacca-kukkuccam) arises, and un-arisen distrust or bewilderment (vicikicchå) arises. Here, vicikicchå, if taken in literal sense, also mean uncured - the mental state that requires to be cured. The process as represented above by ayoniso manasikåro, is something which needs to be removed, as it is highly deplorable (hånabhågiyo).[15]

The Buddha also exposes a counter-scheme, describing yoniso manasikåroó appropriate grasping, for attainment of mental peace and emancipation. And, that scheme tends to alter the output variables by proposing alteration into the input variables. Other than this, there can be no authentic way out. If input variables are rightly attended to or grasped appropriately, they are processed to engender positive virtues (bahukårå dhammå). Appropriate attention or grasping (that is, being aware of the nature of input variables about the nature of sensations that they are mere clinging of mind and their contents are all momentary, i.e., perishable anicca; and therefore, are non-self anattå) would not attract inappropriate mental processing. Appropriate attention yoniso manasikåro engenders happiness (pomojjam); happiness engenders delight (piti); delight removes restiveness (kåyo pasambhati), i.e., engenders calmness; calmness engenders contentment (sukham vedeti); contented mind achieves equipoise of mind (samådhiyati); it is only in state of equipoise of mind that one sees or experiences things as per their true nature (yathåbhµutam jånåti passati);

[13] Anguttara-Nikåya-Påli 10 Danaka-nipåto, 7 Yamaka-vaggo, 1 Avijjå-sutta), p. 229.

[14] Majjhima-Nikåya, 1/1/10, *Mahasatipathåna-sutta*, pp. 36-41.

[15] Samyukta-Nikåya-Påli, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Vol. 4 (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2008), pp. 1738-1739.

and then one becomes aware of the nature of sensations (nibbindati) that one's awareness does not get ensnared by stimuli; and then springs dissociation (virajjati); it is the dissociated mind that enjoys emancipation (vimuccati). The Buddha designates these nine virtues (dhamma) as extremely advantageous.[16] These can successively be put as under: Appropriate attention í happiness í delight í bodily composure í mental contentment í equipoise of mind í cognizing things as per their nature/without interference of subjective contents í awareness about nature of sensations í dissociation í emancipatio**n.**

Thus, as per the Buddhist exposition, one may say that what is called 'unconscious' in popular psychology is basically our inattentiveness about the manasikåra. The naturalistic environment and the grasping therein attract the ayoniso manasikåro resulting into various emotional states. Ayoniso manasikåro can be interpreted as emotional disorder and yoniso manasikåro as emotional order. Modern psychologists apply techniques to correct maladaptive patterns of behaviour by improving emotional response, viz. by correcting negative emotions. The primary focus of psychodynamics is to reveal the unconscious content. Such concerns of a modern psychologist can be well responded to on the basis of the Buddha's psycho-causal-analysis. It explains to us how to bring about the emotional order the yoniso manasikåro. And, so as to understand the unconscious content one has to understand the entire causal structure of the manasikåra so as to understand the dynamics of behaviour. This can be presented in form of the explanatory scheme of infra.[17]

Buddhism and problem of ought to be

For Buddha, the nature of the action or the ethical value of volition is determined by the intention of the person. He defines action in terms of cetanå (intention), which is at work while developing a will to do. A sensation received through senses gets coloured by the kusala or akusala (as per the manasikåra) of the recipient consciousness and gives rise to a will to do (inclination or sankappa). The 'will' determines the nature of action and hence, the ethical purport and worth of the action lies in the ethical value of the 'will' itself. On the same account, one can be held responsible for one's actions as one has a role in development of one's 'will'. The same position can be validated through a negative approach also as one is always in a position to think, will or do otherwise. Thus, the Buddha's analysis escapes the possible charge of psychological determinism which proclaims that our desires and choices are determined by the 'unconscious' over which we hardly have control.

Moreover, since each psychic fact is causally efficacious, one cannot manipulate (by applying some mental gimmick) the course of psychodynamics without genuinely transforming one's 'intention'. And, that is why; one has no other option but to be aware of the mental consequences of every thought-episode, will function, speech-act, or behavioural output. The causal efficacy of the mental states alone determines the ethical value of the act. To illustrate, if we choose an act (such as stealing) such that the mental progeny of the act (citta-santatai) gives rise to negative psychological processing, and that in turn would never let me attain mental peace or happiness adding to negative 'sedimentation' to my unconscious. So, if we are to pursue peace and happiness, we must avoid such act.

However, the partial comprehension of this aspect of Buddhist ethics has led its readers conclude that Buddhist ethics is a variety of consequentialism, which is not completely true. The psychic facts are morally efficacious too, as the cognition of the psychic facts have moral implication. We are not inviting the old debate of ethics whether or not values can be derived from facts (or, whether ought-judgments can be obtained from fact statements), rather bypassing the problem by indicating that the knowledge of the causal structure may contextually be axiologized. For example, the knowledge that fire burns may help arrive at on ought not to put my hand in fire. Similarly, the knowledge that a particular act yields a particular

[16] Digha-Nikåya- *Påli, Pathika-vagga* (11 Dasuttara-sutta): D∂gha-NikåyaPåli, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Vol. 3, Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2005, p. 821.

[17] Digha-Nikåya- *Påli, Pathika-vagga* (11 Dasuttara-sutta), p. 844.

consequence, than on the basis of desirability or undesirability of consequence, the action may be performed or avoided. For instance, if one knows that telling a lie ultimately leads to unrest of mind and if one is desirous of overcoming the unrest, one may conclude that telling a lie ought to be avoided. If the clause, desirous of overcoming the unrest, is ignored as a necessary minor premise or bridge between fact and value, it would be impossible to think of deriving ought-judgment from knowledge of fact.

We may further argue that philosophers engaged in the is-ought-discourse have often failed to recognize the essential difference between logical inference and moral inference. Here, we need to make clear what the unrest of mind actually refers. We use the term as an alternative paraphrase for morally reprehensible. By unrest we mean that a state of mind (or even the chain of mental episodesócitta-santatai) which inflict pain to one, what one desires to avoid or get out of (in all normal conditions not under any internal or internal pressure). In turn, because of the unrest one tends to purse happiness (instead of understanding the cause of pain) assuming that altering the state of mind would grant peace of mind. Such a pursuit of (imaginary or assumed) happiness is an example of escape psychology one desire to be self-oblivious of one's unrest. If unrest is caused due to some unwarranted action or failing to perform some doable deeds, this as a postulate asserts that the action/non-action was morally reprehensible. So, if one wishes to be at mental peace one may not perform (or intend to perform) any such action the nature and consequence of which is genuinely undesirable. In other words, if unrest of mind is not genuinely desirable, the action which produces such unrest is morally reprehensible.

The Limitations of Ethical Evaluation

The reason for evaluating the above scheme of moral psychology in terms of cognitivist or non-cognitivist is that the above analysis bears characteristic of both the approaches. And also, there have been such readings of Buddhist ethics, as Damien Keown puts it, the virtues and vices may be either cognitive or non-cognitive. Aristotle, for instance...distinguishes between the intellectual virtue (aretai dianoetiki) such as insight (sophia) and practical wisdom (phronesis); and the moral virtues or virtues of character (aretai ethikai) such as generosity and courage... this distinction may be seen in Buddhism in the form of an opposition between the intellectual vices rooted in moha, and the moral vices rooted in råga and dveja.[18] Such readings are definitely based upon two different dimensions of the Buddhist expositions of virtues and vices. The exposition bears cognitive character in terms of its project of seeking justification of actions in the cognitive elements (such as cognition of mental states as inner facts) which are knowable given the scheme of the Buddhist psychology.

The most important cognitive dimension of the Buddhist ethical project is that it starts its ethical formulation with the conscious episodes (vijnåna in Pali, or vijjåna in Sanskrit) and locate the genesis of virtues and vices in it. William S. Waldron puts it as; a...vijnåna also refers to cognitive awareness insofar as it arises in conjunction with specific objects. Whereas the samsårika aspect of vijnåna is usually discussed in terms of what has resulted from past actions (i.e. sankhåra), cognitive vijnåna is typically discussed in the context of its present objects...Cognitive awareness is also directly involved with the processes that generate new karma, and it is this karma that, in turn, causes samsårika vijnåna to continue being established in cyclic existence, thereby completing the vicious circle constituting the formula of dependent arising.[19] But, there is a purpose of the cognitive discovery of the vijnåna-function. Cognitivist speaks as though it expects the ethical purport of an act to be describable as empirical facts. Buddhist discovery of the vijnåna-function is to lead to a pragmatic ethical utilization of the cognitive awareness.

This is explained through introduction of the concept of the moral efficacy of facts. Non-descriptivism (or, non-cognitivist) [20] is holds that moral judgments have no descriptive functions. They rather evoke emotive

[18]Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*, Springer, Berlin, Germany, 1992p. 63

[19] William S. Waldron, *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Ålaya-vijnåna* in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought Routledge Curzon, London: 2003, p. 28.

[20] Borchert, *Philosophy and Ethics*, Macmillan Library Reference, New York: 1999 p. 718.

function of human consciousness. No doubt, the emotive aspects can very well be seen in the above presentation of psycho-causal analysis, but it also takes a great deal of care of the descriptive aspect upon which the due axiologization is to take place. Simply on the basis that the non-rational dimension of psychic life which manifests itself across a spectrum or continuum of non-cognitive responses ranging from aversion, hostility, anger and wrath, etc. (encapsulated by the term dveha), to attachment, craving, longing and lust, etc. (encapsulated by the term råga or lobha); one cannot render the Buddhist ethics a non-cognitivist one. The difficulty lies in seeing a division between cognitive function of mind and emotive elements. Buddhism focuses upon understanding of emotions. One needs to understand positive emotions to replace with it the negative emotions, and utilization of the positive emotions for annihilation of the drava (unaware states of mind leading to sprouting of vices the emotional disorders). Speaking plain, one requires development of both the faculties, intellectual as well as emotional.[21]

In this context, Keown is following observations contain a greater characteristic of Buddhist moral psychology: One important conclusion to be drawn from the Abhidharmic analysis is that virtues and vices - since they are dharmas are objective and real...good and bad are not abstractions to be apprehended by observers according to their various intuitions and sensibilities. Nor can morals be reduced to questions of taste or personal preference, as suggested by Emotivism. A final implication of this objectivisation of ethics is that relativism is ruled out: what is to count ultimately as good and bad is not determined by accidental factors but grounded in the reality of human nature. Since human nature is everywhere the same the moral teachings of Buddhism are of universal extent and will hold good at all times and in all places. The corollary of this is that Buddhist ethics cannot be a self-contained system which is intelligible only in its own terms or within its own frame of reference.[22]

It would also be apt to note that even though Buddhism would also not grant any truth-value to the emotional or cognitive elements, but the ground is entirely different from as furnished by cognitivist or non-cognitivist.

Buddhism refrains from assigning truth-value to any cognitive or empirical episode because all such episodes are caused (they are emergent conscious dispositions of the causal function of vijnapti) and also because all such emergent dispositions are impermanent. It can be formulated as of whatever is caused (hence impermanent) cannot bear truth-value.. The formulation must not bring confusion that all emergent conscious dispositions (vijnapti) are meaningless. They are causally and morally efficacious and, hence, pragmatically valuable. Truth and falsity have no logical bearing for the Buddha, they are rather psychological categories. Cognitivist and non-cognitivist are not free from the propositional way of thinking of moral judgments. That is why, the former accepts truth-value and the latter denies. Both the approaches mistakenly reduce morality into either a logical category or into emotion and hence fail to grant an independent standing to the moral.

CONCLUSION

The Buddhist approach of moral psychology is a kind of intelligent and sensitive occasionalism as a blueprint of human mental states, its inner and external pressures, liking and disliking determining one is intention cannot be made in advance. To choose a right action one needs to be always aware of one is intention of the preconditions of one is own mind. Such an approach can be universalized provided that there is a mass level effort for the uplifting of human moral consciousness. In a sense, under framework of the Buddhist morality, the fixing of responsibility of an act on part of an agent is difficult (as in case of behaviourism though for different reasons). If a person commits a crime, he commits so because of certain mental causes. If such an act (a crime) is not desirable, the causes of act have to be addressed. The agent has

[21] Razzino, A. *Pajnå and Karunå* in *Theravada Buddhist Ethics Compared to love in Protestant Christian Ethics*, PhD Thesis, Northwestern University, 1981,

[22] Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*. Springer, Berlin, Germany, 1992, p. 2.and p. 10.

to undergo a therapy, a process of realization or transformation. Hence, a theory of punishment would be a made redundant notion.

NOTES & REFERENCES

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