

MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIP IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

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One of the important issues in the present day Indian context is to discover the space for a possible theorization in feminism. The articulation of man-woman relationship provides a nexus of such and other related inquiries. This relationship is expressed by three different models in ancient Indian philosophy. The models are not separately given but they occur in the context of metaphysical theory of the classification of reality. Most of the classifications of reality speak of two types - the living and the non-living. The classification of reality into male-female type is something which is unique in itself. Whether reality can be classified in this way or whether such an attempt presupposes a different kind of perspective are problems that need serious consideration. This paper attempts to evolve the possible perspective for making this type of classification and in the light of this perspective tries to elaborate the three models of man-woman relationship and suggest their implications for feminist theory.

According to the Indian tradition, the knowledge of any object is not only through reason but also through experience. Most of the classical Indian philosophies (*darśanas*) accept direct sense-perception as a means of knowledge along with others. The so-called exclusive commitment either to reason or to perception does not arise in this context. Everything is an object of both perception and reason. There is no experience that is exclusively rational or exclusively perceptual but every bit of experience is a gestalt of the interplay of both the rational and the perceptual.

The description of reality that comes from the classical Indian philosophy not only refers to the conceptual classification of reality but it also refers to the perception of reality. The direct experience of reality many a time has been expressed in the naive and childlike language of perception. This language is the language of sound, touch, physical form and smell.

Logically, a distinction can be made between conceptualization and perception.¹ Thus Schopenhauer makes a distinction between concept and what he calls an idea, so as to distinguish philosophy and aesthetics. According to him, the domain of philosophy is the domain of reason, reflection and conceptualization. The domain of art, on the other hand, necessarily involves perception, feeling and imagination. Concepts which play an important role in philosophy have a determinate and fixed meaning. The meanings of the concepts do not change so often. But they are barren and unproductive in art. Concepts are to be understood and not to be perceived. Ideas are used in the field of art. They resemble living organisms as they have a generative force, which brings forth that which was not previously put into them. Ideas are not to be understood but they are to be perceived. Yet both philosophy and art are interrelated in that both seek to answer the question "What is life?" by different means, art by percepts and philosophy by concepts.

However, as has been said earlier, the logical distinction between conceptualization and perception does not in any way disfigure the description of reality made by ancient Indian philosophers. The conceptual classification of reality is simultaneously pregnant with imaginative awareness of reality. This imaginative awareness of reality is suggestive and is expressed through various models and images. Such descriptions of reality are the best exemplifications of aesthetic sensibility.²

All Indian philosophical theories are called '*darśan*'. The term '*darśan*' not only implies knowledge but direct experience of reality. The models and images that speak for the reality are such that they are related to the form of life. They are made from actual lived situations by a process of abstraction. They act as heuristic devices for pointing to some form of life. At the same time models also act as exemplars for present day living of men and women who consciously follow and practise them in their own ways. Thus these models hint at the man-women relationship that existed and was lived sometimes. They also act as guides for the man-woman relationships in the future. Indian philosophy consists of three models of man-woman relationship (1) The *Brahma-Māyā* model. (2) The *Purūṣa-prakṛti* model and (3) The *Śiva-Śakti* model. These models have important implications for feminism. At this point, it is necessary to see as to how models are different from symbols. In a sense, models are also symbols.

Symbols are used for representing objects. Models not only represent the objects but also have a formal structure by virtue of which they can be used as heuristic devices for analysis and justification of new thoughts or theories. Yet they can be said to have two aspects which the symbols have. Paul Ricoeur narrates two aspects of symbols - the regressive and the progressive.³

The regressive aspect refers to all those suppressed desires and ambitions of which a human being is not conscious. The progressive aspect throws light on new ideals and moral points of view and, in this sense, symbols have a prophetic flavour. The above mentioned models can be considered from these two aspects. From the psycho-analytic point of view, a search can be made for all those personal and racial memory impressions that have imprinted their marks on the unconscious mind. From another point of view, a search can be made for exploring new horizons of ideals and new normative forms of life that emerge from these models. The construction of utopia would become a challenge in this context. But there is one more reason for treating models as means of research. Models, being symbolic, are means of discovery. As psychiatrist Rollo May had pointed out, they progressively reveal a structure in our relation to nature and our own existence. They reveal a new ethical form and by drawing out inner reality they enable a person to experience greater reality in the outside world as well.⁴ The *Brahma-Māyā*, the *Purūṣa-Prakṛtī*, and the *Śiva-Śakti* models can be considered from this point of view.

Most of the classical western philosophers have classified reality into mind and matter but there is no attempt to make use of the pair of male and female. (the Pythagorean classification includes references to masculinity and femininity but they are treated as qualities and not as substances). The intention behind this exercise is to classify reality. But naming the elements is followed by personifying them. Personification of reals is the unique feature of classical Indian Mataphysics. It is because of this imaginative exercise the elements of the world not only become concepts but also become models. In this way, the domain of philosophy and art merge into one another and do not remain apart as has been suggested by Schopenhauer. Such an exercise provides a wide space for two altogether different theories of modern aesthetics. One of them, namely structuralism, emphasizes the basic structure of the theory and consequently gives more importance to concepts. The other one, Deconstructionism, emphasises the

changing shades of meaning and hence gives more importance to everchanging interpretations. It is interesting to see how both these extreme theories almost converge upon one another. The models used are not models from science. They are not devices to represent some abstract entities but are models from aesthetics. They are not only representations but superimpositions or projections on reality. They presuppose a particular perspective of understanding and interpreting the form of life. The personified elements thus become the vehicles of meaning. They capture a segment of reality and open up a new way of living. If unmasked, they exhibit layers of meaning. But the meanings are never determinate and stable. Different agents at different times and places interpret them in different ways. According to Derrida, this technique is called "active classification" and it is contrasted with the technique of passive classification which takes the form of conceptual analysis.⁵ However, conceptual analysis can go hand-in-hand with interpretations, including new ones. The contrast made by Derrida becomes more complex because the models of *Brahma-Māyā*, *Purūṣa-Prakṛti* and *Śiva-Śakti* are not mechanical models but are organic. The Derridan distinction cannot be applied to these organic models. The two techniques -- the active classification and the passive classification cease to remain unrelated and separate. On the other hand, their everchanging, continuous interplay and configuration add one more dimension to the total complex of meaningfulness. The models are founded on a framework that is rooted in real life situations. The 'inner design' itself becomes flexible and everchanging. The models get a new context and a new meaning everytime. Both the processes of making models and of interpreting them are carried out continuously and this exercise becomes a part of our living.

The consideration of the three models from this point of view may highlight neglected areas of Indian philosophy. The models of reality now should not only be considered from the conceptual point of view but they have to be appreciated from the aesthetic point of view. In order that such an appreciation becomes fruitful and philosophically relevant, the models and the foundational form of life have both to be taken note of. In the normal form of life, man-woman relationship is very complex. Sometimes they are taken to be equals. Sometimes a woman is treated as subordinate and sometimes a woman is given greater importance.

The 'Śiva-Śakti' model of the Śākta philosophy refers to a form of life where woman's position is stronger and more pronounced. The Śiva-Śakti model of the Śaiva philosophy suggests that both are equals. The Purūṣa-Prakṛti model gives more importance to the differences between man and woman. As Māyā is non-different from Brahman, the Brahma-Māyā model does not give any separate status to woman.

The Brahma-Māyā model - The Advaita Vedānta describes reality in terms of Brahman. Brahman refers to the pure existence that has no qualities, no form. It is pure consciousness and it is free. It is the source of creation, growth and destruction of the world.⁶ Whatever exists in the world is the expression of Brahman. Existence, dynamism and livingness are the properties of Brahman : When human beings attempt to understand Brahman from human point of view, they impose human attributes on the reality that has no such attributes. Brahman which has no qualities, no form, now becomes a personified God. The God (Īśvara) is also a manifestation of Brahman. It is because of ignorance the human being forgets the real nature of oneself as non-different from Brahman and this results in the identification of oneself with one's body. This identification further gives rise to distinctions like you and me, yours and mine and the whole web of human world is fabricated.⁷ This phenomenal world is the world of names and forms. This is called "Prapañca". The human world, along with the notions of truth and falsity, rightness and wrongness, and the everyday form of life that is based on distinction, are products of human creation. The origin of this anthropocentrism lies in the process of superimposition (Adhyāsa). However, just as the whole living and non-living world is the expression of Brahman, so also God is but one expression of Brahman. It is because of superimposition of human qualities, Brahman appears to be God (Īśvara) that has a human form. The power of God is called Avidyā or Māyā. It is because of Māyā or ignorance one forgets one's real nature and thinks that one is a physical body. Ignorance or Māyā is not created by humans, although human beings are governed by it and are subject to its functioning. The creator of Māyā is God, hence he is called "Māyin". Māyā functions for the playful enjoyment of the God.

Māyā does not have independent existence but it cannot be said to be non-existent, either, since human beings are affected by her. Māyā is said to be

indescribable. *Māyā* functions in two ways. It envelops an object so that it cannot be perceived properly⁸, consequently an object appears different from what it is. It obstructs the knowledge of an object. The phenomenal world of names and forms is illusory and not real in the true sense of the term. Sometimes a rope appears to be like a serpent. The cognition that it is a serpent is an illusion and when the illusion vanishes, only the rope remains. The phenomenal world is also illusory like a serpent.

The term "*Brahman*" transcends all notions of femininity or masculinity. It stands for Existence, *Par excellence* and various forms of gods and goddesses are nothing but manifestations of Brahman. However, these gods and goddesses have phenomenal existence. *Māyā* depends for her existence on God. God is the creator of the world that is real in the true sense of the term. On the other hand due to *Māyā*, the illusion of the phenomenal world occurs. *Māyā* is lifeless and does not have any purpose of its own existence. It is created for entertaining the God.

The model of *Brahma-Māyā* is important in many ways. *Māyā* does not exist in the true sense of the term. She is not substance proper. The very mode of her existence is of a lower order. A woman also belongs to the lower level of existence. She does not have an independent existence in the sense she does not have her own purpose for life. Her whole existence and living is for the sake of man. The *Manusmṛiti* and other ancient treatises state that it is woman's duty to give sexual satisfaction to the male and procreate. The *Manusmṛiti* also narrates laziness, fickleness and lying as the natural, inborn qualities of woman.⁹ It is said that she is not at all worthy of trust. It is emphasized that she has always to be under the control of her parents, husband and sons. All this implies attributions of wholly dependent and slave-like existence.

Many implications about man-woman relationship follow from the above male point of view. The relation between a man and a woman is never taken to be a relation between two equals. A woman has no identity and she is also not supposed to have her identity. Whatever identity she is supposed to have is conferred on her by males. She is like a slave and a male is like a master. A slave does not have his own wish, similarly a woman cannot act according to her wish but she has to follow the duties that are prescribed by man. The moral code of conduct, which is almost followed religiously, looks upon woman as

property. Ancient Indian law speaks of women and children as the property of the male. The clubbing together of women, *Vaiśyas* and *śudras* in *Geetā* implicitly presupposes the prejudice that woman has no mind and hence no capacity to think. This prejudice is presented in the *Brahma-Māyā* model.

The Purūsa - Prakṛti Model - The second model is the *Sāṅkhya* model of *Purūṣa* and *Prakṛti*. The *Sāṅkhya* philosophy speaks of *Puruṣa - Prakṛti* as two independent substances. Both are pure existents and cannot be perceived directly. *Purūṣa* is sentient and eternally existent. He is the seer and one who witnesses everything (*sākṣi*). Having no qualities, he is not subject to the experience of pleasure and pain. Sentience is the mark of *Purūṣa*. He is neither the doer nor the enjoyer. He is neutral and indifferent towards the experiences of the world. He is above bondage and liberation in the sense that he never falls into bondage or gets liberated. The experience of pleasure and pain are of the body-mind complex (*jīva*) and never of the *Purūṣa*. The *Purūṣa* identifies itself with body-mind amalgum and hence experiences sorrows. The moment he understands that he is wholly and radically different from the subtle body-mind organism, he is liberated. According to *Sāṅkhya* philosophy *Purūṣas* are many and because of their contact with the *Prakṛti* they get the forms of subtle body-mind organisms.

The second substance is *Prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is inert and is wholly devoid of consciousness. Yet she has to go through the cycle of birth and death. The distinctive quality of *Prakṛti* is that she is active, although she has neither consciousness nor knowledge.¹⁰

Prakṛti is made up of three qualities, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. *Sattva* produces knowledge of doing many things. *Rajas* initiates the tendency to act and *Tamas* stops the tendency to act and promotes lethargy. The three qualities act and interact with one another, sometimes helping one another, and other times dominating one another. They behave and co-exist like man and woman. The state of their equilibrium is called "Primordial *Prakṛti (Mūla-Prakṛti)*". The coming together of these three qualities is not for one's own self because *Prakṛti* is lifeless (unconscious). It is activated for the sake of enjoyment and liberation of the *Purūṣa*. Her activity is as natural as the occurrence of milk in the cow for her calf.¹¹ The mere existence of sentient, neutral *Purūṣa* activates *Prakṛti*. The coming together of *Purūṣa* and *Prakṛti* is like coming together of a lame

person and a blind person.¹² The whole world of phenomena is produced out of this coming together of *Purūṣa* and *Prakṛti*.

Purūṣa comes into contact with *Prakṛti* and identifies himself with *Prakṛti*'s experiences of pleasure and pain. He becomes unhappy and quests for liberation. Ultimately, he understands that he is radically different from *Prakṛti*. The knowledge of his true identity (being) liberates him. If there is no one to see and enjoy, the very functioning of *Prakṛti* has no meaning. The minute body that comes into contact with different gross bodies acts like an actor. In this way *Purūṣa* has to undergo sufferings of birth, old age and death until the minute body is destroyed. The dancer goes to the back side of the stage as soon as her dance is over. Similarly, once the world has been created, *Prakṛti* becomes indifferent towards the world. *Purūṣa* is always pure, free and conscious. Only *Prakṛti* has bondage or liberation.¹³

The model of *Purūṣa-Prakṛti* refers to two independent substances. If unmasked, it exhibits one more form of man-woman relationship. Man and woman have each their own identity. They have their own independent existence and their own distinctive qualities. Their existence, however, is qualitatively different. *Purūṣa* has consciousness but *Prakṛti* is devoid of it. She does not have an iota of consciousness. The distinctive quality of *Purūṣa* is knowledge, and the distinctive quality of *Prakṛti* is capacity to act.¹⁴ Yet their coming together is purposive. They come together in order to compensate for their own imperfections. *Purūṣa* does not undertake any activity. He is basically pure and free. But because of his contact with *Prakṛti*, he is dragged into the cycle of phenomenal world. He does not act but, being conscious, his mode of existence is of a superior kind. Similarly, a man, by nature, is supposed to be superior. A woman, being on par with unconscious inanimate objects, has no intelligence. Her mode of existence itself is of a lower level. Yet she has the artistic qualities of an actress like that of charming the people. The concept of *Prakṛti* expresses the view that a woman lures and hypnotizes. Yet the status of *Prakṛti* is higher than the status of *Māyā* in *Brahma-Māyā* model, for *Prakṛti* has an independent existence. She is the cause of the world and the God does not participate in the creation of the world. This model presupposes that the roles of man and woman are basically different. Yet their coming together is governed by pragmatic considerations. The view that both of them co-operate in order to fulfil their

missions suggests prudence in practical life. Here the utility consideration becomes more important than the understanding between man and woman. No understanding and cooperation between them is hinted. Apparently the relation between them looks like the relation between two equal beings - but the qualities attributed to woman are such that she is almost like pre-ordained executive who carries out the plan of the board of directors. She has no identity of her own nor has she the power of making decisions. She is also not supposed to know that one must have such an identity. She is a slave-ex-machine.

Such a view implicitly presupposes the modern biological and psychological determinism in terms of which the differences between man and woman are projected to be basically natural and hence unavoidable.

The third model is the *Śiva-Śakti* model.¹⁵ This model comes from *Kāśmīri Śaivism*, *Śākta* philosophy and from the philosophy of Jñāneshwara.

Kāśmīri Śaivism : In this philosophy, *Śiva* is believed to be all pervading, eternal and pure consciousness. He is beyond perception and conception. The word *Śiva* is beyond the comprehension of language and thought. The realization of *Śiva* is never through words or thoughts. There is no *ida* or symbol that fully represents 'Śiva'. No human intellect can understand it. He is not an object of knowledge and yet can be directly experienced.

Kāśmīri Śaivism believes *Śiva* to be a personal God *Īśvara*. *Īśvara* is full of love.¹⁶ *Śaktī* is an inseparable part of the loving God. *Vendānta* does not give an independent status to *Māyā*. *Sāṅkhya* takes *Prakṛtī* to be lifeless. In keen contrast *Śaivism* states that *Śakti* is not inert but living. She is *Śiva's* energy. She is the knowledge, activity and desire of *Śiva*.¹⁷ Sometimes she becomes the power of will. Volition is the grace of God and it creates desire for emancipation. The power to know is a means to know God. Sometimes she becomes the power of activity. It is in and through the power of activity that the whole world continues to survive and grow.¹⁸

Śakti is the cause of both -- bondage and liberation. It is through the medium of *Śakti* that *Śiva* becomes one with the whole creation or world. It is through the exercise of *Śakti* that *Śiva* becomes the creator, caretaker and destroyer of the selves. The whole universe is created through *Śakti*. *Śiva* is not created by *Śakti* and *Śakti* is not created by *Śiva*. In fact, *Śiva* and *Śakti* are

just two names. Both the names refer to the same existence, (reality). *Śiva* is the quiet, silent and neutral state of *Śakti* and *Śakti* is the dynamic, active state of *Śiva*.¹⁹ The relation between *Śiva* and *Śakti* is like the relation between the Sun and the rays of the Sun.²⁰ They are one.

The attempt to trace the roots of this model leads us to a form of life where man and women are equals. Yet on the metaphysical level, they do not refer to two separately existing realities. It is only on the level of attributes that they are different. Both of them are expressions of one and the same existence. There are similarities and differences in them. They are similar in respect of being living and conscious. They are different in the sense man is neutral and passive but woman is active and dynamic, she takes interest in everything. Their coming together is something that is natural.

This model places man and woman in a wider context of 'being human' but this context does not produce any new thought. The suggestion that both are human beings does not lead to forming a specific relationship between the two. From the grammatical point of view, man becomes the subject and woman as his power becomes either a quality or an activity. Thus there is one-sided dependence of woman on man. This dependence is expressed by treating her like an object. Hence *Kaśmirī Śaivism* does not provide any foundation for equality between man and woman.

Śākta Philosophy : The *Śiva-Śakti* model is also used by *Śākta* philosophy. Yet the *Śākta* model and consequently the model used by *Tantrism* is very much different from *Kaśmirī Śaivism* model and also from other varieties of *Śaivism*. According to *Śākta* philosophy, the reality on which the existence of the world depends is both the formal and efficient cause of the world. The belief that there is feminine element at the root of every creation is central to the *Śākta* philosophy.²¹ This basic reality or energy behind the creation is everpresent. There is neither creation nor destruction of energy, but only transformations. This reality has no beginning and no end. It is eternal, self luminous and dynamic. The *Śākta* philosophy calls this state as *Śiva-Śakti Samarasya*. In this original state of unity or oneness, *Śiva* element is inactive, neutral and just perceives everything. But the *Śakti* element is free and active. On the empirical level, even the element that is called is *Śiva* is also a form of *Śakti*. One cannot talk of *Śiva* without *Śakti*.²² The world is grounded in the

oneness of *Śakti* and *Śiva*. Both are independent and yet they are together. There is an implicit harmony between them. There is a feeling of oneness and a sense of belongingness between them. This is the original primordial state of existence. At the next level, the feeling of oneness is replaced by the feeling of one's own distinctness. This creates the feeling of one's own identity against the awareness of the other. Both the elements then start acting and reacting against one another. These two forms of energy are called fire (*Agni*) and the moon (*Soma*). Fire produces suffering and death. *Soma* (the moon) produces happiness and life. The function of fire is to destroy and that of the moon is to create. The whole world is the play of *Śiva* and *Śakti*. It is the throbbing of energy or *Śakti*. *Śakti* is non-different from *Śiva*. When she desires to see the functioning of *Śiva* and *Ātmā*, the creation of the world takes place.²³

The whole universe is implicitly present in the womb of this great power (*Mahāsakti*). The origination, growth and decay of the world is but the play of this power. *Śiva* is sentient and luminous, *Śakti* is dynamic. The *Śākta* philosophy states that *Śiva-Śakti* is both sentience and dynamism (*Sat, cit*) harmonized together. *Śakti* is free, she produces livingness which gives rise to the awareness of one's own self. This awareness of oneself is a form of *Śiva*, but *Śiva* is also an inseparable part of *Śakti*. *Jīva* or individual self is identical with *Śiva*. When the self forgets its identity and becomes aware of its physical body, it develops ego and becomes proud. It is only by the grace of the teacher that it becomes aware of its real nature. In its unity with *Śiva*, the power of worship (*Bhakti*) on the part of the self becomes one with the sentience of *Śiva* and a feeling of oneness is created. The self becomes *Śiva* like but not *Śiva* himself. The worship of *Śiva*, (*Bhakti*) is not converted into *Śakti* but it becomes like *Śakti*. In this state, there is no question of either bondage and liberation. What remains is the self-luminous, harmonious and everflowing *existence, par excellence*. This is the perfect state of the existence of the universe.²⁴

This model of *Śiva-Śakti* would have given a new turn to feminist thoughts. All other philosophies presuppose a male's point of view. Central to *Śākta*-philosophy is the thesis that the world is produced by female element. *Śiva* is also considered as the form of *Śakti*. Here woman is considered to be the mother of everything. She is neither inert nor like an animal but living and intelligent. She is not the object of enjoyment but like a man she is an enjoyer,

an agent. She does not act as an obstruction to liberation but she helps in liberating the self. There are many beautiful names of the goddess in the *Śākta* philosophy. *Mokṣadā* (the giver of liberation) is one among them. The *Śākta* philosophers believe that realization of self is also the result of the awakening of a power (*Śakti*) which is called "*Kuṇḍalini*".

A woman not only gives birth but she also brings up the young ones. In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, the goddess says that she would nourish the whole world with the life-sustaining vegetables, which would grow out of her own body and that after the heavy rains, she would again come on earth, as *Śākambhari*. The *Śākta* philosophy glorifies the woman. Motherhood has always been a matter of respect for the Indians. The various forms of *Śakti* occur in the different forms of goddesses and their worship. The model of *Śakti* at least gives us a clue to infer that sometimes there must have been matriarchal societies in which woman reigned supreme.

At the practical level, the model implies that man and woman are on par with one another. They have their own distinctive qualities and yet none of them is either superior or inferior. The model is suggestive of a peaceful, harmonious co-existence of man and woman. It explicitly expresses equality that is demanded by the feminists. But, more importantly, the model supplies hints to develop a possible ontology and epistemology of feminism. Freedom, dynamism, power of creation, luminosity, the throbbing of life are some of the qualities that would be necessary for such a theory. This theory would look upon nature not as a resource but as a source of life. If mother's point of view is generalised nothing remains except love and benevolence for the world. However, if feminism would take this stance, there is the danger of creating the female counterpart of male chauvinism, where, instead of man, woman would dominate, matranize and do everything that is done by man in a male-dominated society. On the other hand, the *Śiva-Śakti* model opens a new possibility wherein transcendence of male-chauvinism as well as feminism itself becomes a necessary step. Here transcendence does not mean destruction of masculinity or femininity but awareness of a limit - a point of perfection beyond which the differences cannot be stretched. Such a transcendence would provide for the creation of a new kind of world, a world in which man and woman are in perfect harmony joy, and

peace with each other. The *Śiva-Śakti* model is thus the symbol of the ideal man-woman relationship.

Śiva-Śakti model of Jñāneśwar : In "Anubhavāmṛta", Jñāneśwar talks about the creation of the world as the result of coming together of *Śiva* and *Śakti*. According to him *Śiva* and *Śakti* are independent and equal yet because of love they cannot remain away from one another. Dr. Pradeep Gokhale presents *Jñāneśwara's* description of *Śiva-Śakti* at four different levels.²⁵ On the first level, both the elements are independent. The essential properties of *Śiva* element are existence, capacity to perceive, enjoy and act. The essential properties of *Śakti* element are capacity 'to be perceived' to become an object of perception. Both come together and a child in the form of the world comes into existence. *Śiva* and *Śakti* can stay away from one another but because of their attraction and love towards one another they live together and not separately. At the next level, it is impossible for them to live separately because *Śakti* becomes the quality of *Śiva*. Both are expression of existence, *par excellence*, both are luminous. They live so happily that their so-called separate existence is also illusory. They are one and the same. At this level *Śakti* cannot be separated from *Śiva*, just as sweetness cannot be separated from jaggery. This view is similar to *Kaśmiri Śaivism* model. At the third level, *Śiva-Śakti* are not separated but they are one. Both are just two names of *Śiva* or, just as well of *Śakti*. Jñāneśwar states that the difference between man and woman is also the expression of one single *Śiva*-element.

At the fourth level, the whole world is split into two parts *Śiva* and *Śakti*. Both of them refer to separate substances but yet they are not mutually exclusive. They are mingled together. This model seems to have been assumed in the image of "*Ardhanārī Nateswara*". In a sense, they are beyond one and many. They are so experienced together that one cannot understand whether it is the experience of *Śiva* or of *Śakti*. Jñāneśwar also believes like *Kaśmiri-Śaivism* that the whole world is produced out of *Śakti* in the form of knowledge, desire and action. He says that the world is the expression of *Śiva*. Just as the moon and its light, the ocean and its waves cannot be separated, similarly *Śiva* and the world cannot be separated. The world becomes a sportive play of *Śiva* and *Śakti*.

The consideration of these four types of relationship with reference to feminism evokes four different types of man-woman relationship. At the first

level, man and woman are independent and equal. Both have consciousness and intelligence. Man is capable of action, he is the doer, enjoyer and observer, woman, on the other hand, is the object of action, an object of enjoyment. Both of them have their own distinctive natures but their love for one another does not allow them to remain separate. However, there is a logical possibility that they can live separately. In this context, the love and understanding becomes more important but the relation of the enjoyer and that which is an object of enjoyment does not vanish.

At the second level, woman becomes the power of man. The relation between man and woman becomes a relation between substance and quality. Thus both are not on par with each other. There is no reciprocal relation between the two.

At the third level, man and woman are just two names of *Siva*, the difference between them is a matter of nominal, linguistic type. In reality they do not have an independent existence. Both are imperfect and unless they come together they cannot overcome their imperfections.

At the fourth level, man and woman turn out to be two different modes of existence. Their personalities and qualities are different yet they are interdependent. This view suggests that, although being equal and independent, they cooperate with one another. *Śiva-Śakti* model in this sense can give rise to equality between man and woman because even after coming together their distinctive qualities are not destroyed. Their identity is preserved. On the psychological level, some qualities are common to both man and woman but some qualities are different and unique. This particular view springs from *Śiva-Śakti* model of this type. The psychological questions about the uniqueness of qualities with reference to man and woman will have a different dimension from this model. Yet this model acts like a metaphor. It does not provide the determinants of heterogeneity or homogeneity, either explicitly or implicitly.

The discussion of these above mentioned models at least suggests that the articulation of man-woman relationship has anthropological, philosophical, psychological, social, political and aesthetic aspects. Any question of feminism in the context of Indian tradition demands serious attention to these various aspects.

The consideration of these three models also suggests one thing, that is, even within the male dominated discourse there is a possibility of progressive transcendence in terms of better attitude towards woman. The same discourse contains *Brahma-Māyā* model that denies any status to woman, the *Purūṣa-Prakṛti* model that grants independent existence to woman and the *Śiva-Śakti* model opens up a new form of life wherein woman is respected. Both the glorified and the denigrated versions of the models highlight new areas of research in feminism.

NOTES

1. Schopenhauer, "*The World as will and Representation*" (Payne E.F. 1) (trans.) Dover Publications, 1969, Vol. II, page 235 and page 406.
2. These models are not expressions of primitive modes of thinking where language is not very important but they are expressions of a refined sensibility. At times, maturity in thinking leads to the awareness of the limits of language. The classical Indian thinkers however did not think (like Wittgenstein) that one should remain silent where language falls short of expression. On the other hand, for them the limits of language open up new and novel ways of 'sensing' the things. The reality exhibits itself and the experience of reality is a matter of 'perceiving' and not just thinking.
3. Paul Ricoeur, "These authentic symbols are truly regressive progressive, remembrance gives rise to anticipation; archaism gives rise to prophecy" ... Such symbols both disguise and reveal; (page 497 from *Frued and Philosophy* translated by Denis Savage. Yale Uni. Press, 1970.)
4. Rolo May (edited, Introduction), *Symbolism in Religion and Literature*, George Braziller, New York, 1961. Page 45.
5. Derrida, J., *Writing and Difference*, Bass. A. (trans.), Routledge and Kegan Paul, Page 11, Page 292 as quoted by Stuart Sirm in his essay, 'Structuralism and Post-Structuralism', pages 426, 427. From *Philosophical Aesthetics and Introduction* (ed.) Oswald Hanfling Blackwell, 1972.
6. Janmādyasya Yatah, Second Verse, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣye Vaidika Śāṅkar Advaitamatānūvāda*, (Marathi), edited and Published by D.V.Jog, 1954, Page 589.

7. Adhyāsa-bhāṣya, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. Page 170.
8. In the *Atharva Veda* and *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* the term *Māyā* has been used in the sense of magical power.
9. The *Manusmṛti*, Adhyaya 9, Verses 17, 14, 13 and 16. From *Shri Sārtha Manusmṛti*, edited and translated into Marathi by Pandit Ramchandra Sastri Ambadas Joshi, Sri Gurudev Prakasan, Pune 411 002.
10. *Sānkhya Kārikā*, verse 19, edited by Dr. Ramashankar Tripathi (Hindi), Varanasi, 1970.
11. *Ibid.*, verse 57.
12. Śaṅkaracāryā argues that Purūṣa is indifferent, passive and cannot activate Prakṛti. Even a lame person has to act in order to help a blind person. Purūṣa is simply incapable of any action. So the analogy of the blind and the lame person breaks down. See "*Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*" Adhyāya 2, Pāda 2, Sutra 7. From the Marathi translation of *Śaṅkarbrahmasūtra*. Volume 2, by Vāsudevśāstri Abhyankar and Prof. Cāndorkar. Published by Bhāndarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, October 1957.
13. *Sankhyakārika*, verse 59 and 62, edited by Rāmaśankar Tripathi (Hindi), Varanasi, 1970.
14. It is because of the dynamic, active nature of *Prakṛti*. Prof. D.P. Chattopadhyaya seems to hold the view that the *Prakṛti - Purūṣa* model must have been emerged in the matriarchal society.
15. *Śiva-Śakti* were worshipped in the pre-Aryan Sindhu Culture as the Phallic Symbols Linga and Yoni.
16. Wherever there is God, there is love and where there is love, there is God. Tirumantiram, verse 151.
17. Sivajñāna Siddhiyār, 1.66 *Śaiva-Siddhānta Darśan*, (along with the Hindi translation) by Dr. Kailāsapati Miśra, Ardhanaṛiṣhvar Prakāśan, Vāranasi, page 57, footnote 2.
18. According to *Kaśmiri Śaivism* the power of activity which *Śiva* has is the natural play, a throbbing of the Lord *Śiva*. The *Śaiva-Siddhānta* on the other hand holds that this activity is motivated by the noble desire to uplift the human beings.
19. Spinoza talks of two expressions of substance, 'Natura Naturata' and 'Natura

Naturans'. 'Natura Naturata' refers to whatever has been created. It refers to the passive state of Nature. 'Natura Naturans' refers to Nature in its active form creating the whole world. To Spinoza, Nature created (Naturata) is created by Nature naturating, creating (Naturans - the active state). Both are expressions of one single substance or God. Śaivism goes a step further and defines the passive (Śiva) and the active (Śakti) in terms of one another. So there is a reciprocity between them.

20. Śiva-Jñāna Siddhiyār, Supakkam, 5, 9. Foot note 1, from Śaiva- *Siddhānta darśan*, by Kailaspati Misra, Vārānasi, 1982.
21. Dr. Deviprasad Chattopadhyaya in his book *Lokāyat* quotes the following verse from the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna*. The verse expresses the statement by the Goddess herself "I shall support (nourish) the whole world with the life-sustaining vegetables, which shall grow out of my own body (*Ātmadhasambhavaihi*) during a period of heavy rain I shall again fame on the earth, then as *Śākambhari*."
22. Gopinath Kaviraj 'Hindi Book' *Tantrik Vangamaya me Shaktadristi*, Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad, Patna, 1963. Page 133.
23. Cakreshvara Bhattacharya, *Śāktadarshanam* (Sanskrit) 1968, page 92.
24. *Ibid.*, page 100.
25. Pradeep Gokhale, his Marathi book 'Jñānadevānce Anubhavāmṛutatil Tattvajñān' Published by Alka Gosavi, 1985, page 15 to 18.

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