

Dada Bhagwan's Insight on Intellect

Revista Review Index Journal of
Multidisciplinary | e-ISSN: 2583-0031
Double-blind peer-reviewed | Refereed
Quarterly Online Journal
4(1) 30-36, 2024
©The Author(s) 2024
DOI: 10.31305/rrijm2024.v04.n01.004
<https://rrijm.com/>



Date of Publication: 31 Mar, 2024

*Dr. Dyuti Yajnik

Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad

Abstract: In this paper the attempt has been made to clarify Dada Bhagwan's concept of Intellect. Further, its difference and relation with the concept of faith, Knowledge, Prajna are also seen critically. The whole approach of Dada Bhagwan is analytical, critical as well as practical. Further, it should be noted that like Swaminarayana or Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Dada Bhagwan also narrated the metaphysical, epistemological or moral truths in very lucid and colloquial language and expressions. The highest noble truths are expressed by him with simple examples of day-to-day like. Thus, it can be said regarding the writings of Dada Bhagwan that an illiterate will find it easy to understand and a scholar will find complex reasoning in his writing. The paper comprises of the narration and clarifications of Dada Bhagwan's theory of Akrama Vijnana. Here, fate and freedom of soul, emancipation of soul is discussed with reference to the use of intellect. Dada Bhagwan elaborately gives the specific definition of Faith, Fate, Freedom, Intellect, Knowledge, Decisive knowledge, Prajna etc. Further it is expressively seen in Dada Bhagwan's writings that the whole effort is done not only for intellectual pleasure, but for the purpose of Sadhana or spiritual practices for the attainment of salvation. Firstly, we will see his basic brief concept of Akrama Vijnana according to Dada Bhagwan and then his detailed definitions, concepts and practices will be discussed, with his views on the necessity and limitations of intellect.

Keywords: Intellect, Faith, Prajna, Akram Vijnan, Dharma

1 | INTRODUCTION

Dada Bhagwan or Dadashri (Ambalal Patel) (7 November 1908 - 2 January 1988) has said to attain to self-realization in 1958. He started preaching his realization as the "Akram Vijnana Movement", literally means the science or knowledge which leads to realization without any sequence or rank (krama).

Normally, in Indian tradition the Sadhana path is drawn in the step-by-step purification path including Jain principles. Unlike this, the Akram Vignan promises instant salvation through the grace of Simandhar Swami, for whom, it is believed that Dada Bhagwan serves as a medium. His followers believe that they

*Corresponding Author

Dr. Dyuti Yajnik, Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad
Email: dyutyajni@gmail.com

30



Creative Commons Non Commercial CC BY-NC: This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 License (<http://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits non-Commercial use, reproduction and distribution of the work without further permission provided the original work is attributed.

Access Online



will be reborn in two lives in Mahavideha, a mythical land described in Jain cosmology from where they can achieve Moksha (liberation) as they are in connection with Gyani (knower). Flugel regards the movement to be a form of Jain-Vaishnava syncretism, a development analogous to the Mahayana in Buddhism. (*Flugel: 2005*)

In this paper the attempt has been made to clarify Dada Bhagwan's concept of Intellect. Further, its difference and relation with the concept of faith, Knowledge, Prajna are also seen critically. The whole approach of Dada Bhagwan is analytical, critical as well as practical. Further, it should be noted that like Swaminarayana or Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Dada Bhagwan also narrated the metaphysical, epistemological or moral truths in very lucid and colloquial language and expressions. The highest noble truths are expressed by him with simple examples of day-to-day life. Thus, it can be said regarding the writings of Dada Bhagwan that an illiterate will find it easy to understand and a scholar will find complex reasoning in his writing.

The paper comprises of the narration and clarifications of Dada Bhagwan's theory of Akrama Vijnana. Here, fate and freedom of soul, emancipation of soul is discussed with reference to the use of intellect. Dada Bhagwan elaborately gave the specific definition of Faith, Fate, Freedom, Intellect, Knowledge, Decisive knowledge, Prajna etc. Further it is expressively seen in Dada Bhagwan's writings that the whole effort is done not only for intellectual pleasure, but for the purpose of Sadhana or spiritual practices for the attainment of salvation.

Firstly, we will see the basic brief concept of Akrama Vijnana according to Dada Bhagwan and then his detailed definition, concepts and practices will be discussed, with his views on the necessity and limitations of intellect.

2 | AKRAM VIJNANA CONCEPT OF DHARMA (QUALITY)

Regarding the worldly outlook, the Jaina's concept of syadvada is very much seen in the philosophy of Dada Bhagwan. He said that for Jnani, an object with diverse qualities is real. All are real, but relative. It is because of different outlook. In the center, all types of truths are seen. His unique belief about the quality of soul is, that which includes every aspect of Truth, is the Atmadharma (quality of soul) and this only will lead seekers towards self-realization.

3 | TYPES OF INTELLECT

According to Dadaji, there are two types of Intellect: Samyak Buddhi and Viparita Buddhi: (i) Proper Intellect and (ii) Adverse Intellect

3.1 Proper Intellect:

According to Dadaji, the proper intellect leads towards liberation. Liberation can be attained only after acquiring proper intellect. This proper intellect gives the knowledge of true reality. Very few can attain to this proper intellect.

3.2 Adverse Intellect

Dadaji says that where there is the absence of proper intellect, there is an adverse intellect. Adverse intellect is the opposite of liberation. The nature of this type of intellect is that it enhances the base of worldly life by showing adverse or reverse of the absolute reality. Advaita Vedanta's concept of Adhyasa is similar to Dadaji's concept of adverse intellect. "Adhyaso Namah Atasmith Tadbuddhihi", means the Maya's two functions of Avarana and Vikshepa can be understood in the simple language of Dadaji as Adverse Intellect. Thus, like adhyasa, one cannot see the whole reality, but rather understand something reverse from the reality. This function is of adverse intellect.

This adverse intellect does not allow a seeker to attain to liberation, but rather drag an individual towards worldly objects. That way, this intellect concentrates on worldly object, thinking constantly of worldly benefits and worldly loss, instead of liberation. This type of intellect only follow the Sansara (world and worldly things).

4 | PROPER INTELLECT AND ADVERSE INTELLECT

Dadaji believes that all people, the whole humanity is lost and confused between Proper Intellect and Adverse intellect. Further, the proper intellect shows good and noble things and adverse intellect shows wrong and bad things. But he drew the attention towards the understanding that these both types of intellect, ultimately dragging towards worldly physical things only. Dadaji called it adverse intellect. He firmly believes that this adverse intellect is harmful to both – the given as well as the receiver. Instead, the proper intellect is useful for both.

5 | INTELLECT OF BUSINESSMAN AND OF WORRIER

It is apparent that different people have different types of intellect. He classifies broadly in two parts, that is the intellect of a businessman and the intellect of a worrier and shows that the intellect of worrier is helpful for salvation and the intellect of businessman is rather hindrance to the salvation. Dadaji says that in the society, the business-man are having very smart, subtle intellect. This type is called 'Gross Intellect' or 'Fat Intellect' by Swaminarayana. He says that the business-man has this type of intellect, therefore, he has to suffer a great. This type of intellect is putting a man behind in the path of liberation. He says that to achieve liberation is the action of a really brave person. Only, a mighty can achieve this.

Worries have physical might. But the soul is different from cast (Khatriya) and therefore, in spite of having might and courage, the warriors or Kshatriya are confused regarding their personality or characteristics.

Still, Dadaji analyses that, if a warier decides to attain to Moksha, his characteristics (Prakriti) of might will help him to achieve liberation immediately. He compares businessman (Vyapari) with warrior (Kshatriya) and argues that the warrior will take the decision faster than that of a businessman regarding the meaninglessness of the world. He makes his disciples aware regarding the deception. He says that 'I had seen a business man, who acquired Bhave for liberation, but as he is not that much strong, he trapped in the trap of worldly things and cannot attain to the liberation'. He emphasizes that be aware of such an adverse intellect which creates great confusion in life.

Again, comparing the nature or characteristics of the intellect of businessman and warrior, he mentioned with illustration, that a warrior is coming to temple, he will take all money from his pocket and donate all, while, a businessman will calculate and think twice about how much to donate. It may be that Dadaji is of the opinion that, warrior is using less the adverse Intellect than that of a businessman.

He came to this conclusion after observing that all Tirthankars are from the warrior (Khatriya) family and that is why they are gifted with the nature which have less adverse intellect. He says that to earn money is just a cycle of filling and melting, nothing more. And on this futile activity, all are wasting this life as well as the life after death.

6 | TRUTH AND HONESTY (COMMON AND CUNNING INTELLECT)

Talking practical thing, Dada Bhagwan says that common intellect is usual, but intellect which is cunning, is harmful. He is in a way differentiate between truth and honesty. He gives example that if you speak the truth which is pleasant to the listener and not the whole truth, then you are not having pure intellect. He says that Vanika (Vanika) will not even kill small insect or will not do gross theft. But if they are doing very subtle killing or subtle theft, then they are having adverse intellect, though it appears that they have a pure intellect. Dada Bhagwan very emphatically says that the subtle dishonesty is more dangerous than the gross untruth or gross killing. He says that the gross killer or liar may, at one time, get the salvation,

but the subtle killer or subtle liar will ever remain in darkness. Thus, it is clear that Dada Bhagwan clearly distinguishes between truth and honesty. Jnani will live a life as it is, just simple and honest life. There will be total consistency between his thought, speech and action. And that is the real truth with honesty.

It is obvious that only this type of behaviour, having truth with honesty, will be followed only after the 'Definite Knowledge' (Nishchita Jnana). According to Dada Bhagwan, the true practical behaviour, which has not adverse, but the proper intellect will prevail only after having a 'decision' (Nishchaya). Socrates says that virtue is knowledge or scripture says that Rte Jnana na Muktihi, means, unless you have proper knowledge or decisive knowledge, you will not be behaving properly, will not get salvation. He says that "संसारनो अकमविज्ञान साथेनो ज्ञानप्रकाश क्वेशमुक्ति अने आनंदना अनुभवमां परिशमे छे."

7 | NECESSITY AND LIMITATIONS OF INTELLECT

According to Dadaji, if the worldly intellect increases, the misery in life will also increase. He says that developed intellect carries misery and suffering in life. Here, he must be talking about the adverse intellect and not the proper intellect. Because of this type of intellect, we have to suffer a lot in the world. He believes that the ego, that feels that 'I am the doer' is the cause of all types of misery and sufferings in life. This diverse intellect diverts the soul from God and the soul is roaming in Sansare because of this diverse intellect. This soul is roaming here and there and lost in the world.

Dadaji believes the need for intellect is only required until the realization is achieved, the true knowledge is achieved. According to Dadaji, the need for intellect (Proper Intellect) is for attainment of True knowledge, and not for worldly achievement or money or name or fame etc.

According to Dadaji, a person is getting any worldly things, namely name, fame, money etc. is the outcome of fate, and not of Intellect. He firmly advised that proper intellect should only be used for spiritual path. He says that every action or code of conduct should be followed rigorously, subtly, particularly and with humbleness.

Here, for worldly name, fame, money etc. he is deterministic and for spiritual Sadhana, he is talking about volitional actions and freedom of will. He advised that Samayika, Pratikrana and Protyakhana should be religiously and strongly followed. Here, one should stop using adverse intellect and start using proper intellect.

Metaphysically, the world is designed with that Dadaji told, 'The scientific circumstantial evidence' and within view-point, there is no limitation in the world. Everything is designed.

8 | DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE

Dada Bhagwan believes that the faith is the uncertain knowledge, while the proper knowledge is an experimental knowledge. It can be said that the Nirvikalpak Pratyasatti of Naiyayikas or Sruti Pramana can be considered as a faith, whereas the direct perception or direct self-experience is the only considered as a knowledge. (Nishchita Jnana) According to Dada Bhagwan, faith is a general information, whereas knowledge is clear, distinct and pure experience.

8.1 Process of Knowledge

Remaining in one own self and the aim is only 'To know', first it starts with faith or observation and then comes 'to know' which is very much different from just believing or having just faith.

8.2 Prajna and Intellect

According to Dadaji, the Prajna is a direct light of a soul while intellect is an indirect light of a soul. Indirect light means the light which comes through the medium of ego. Prajna is one stage of the development

of knowledge. Gradually the ignorance removed, more and more light will come, and the evolution of soul takes place to reach salvation or Kevaljnana.

When soul gets emancipation from the darkness, soul will be capable of giving light to the whole universe. That soul will make more higher the whole universe. In other words, that soul will get the capacity to know all the objects of knowledge. This is a Kevaljnana. The power of soul, which illumine the whole universe is a Kevaljnana.

9 | FUNCTIONS OF PRAJNA

The Prajna will save a soul from everything that is harmful in the path of salvation. Further, it will make clear also what is useful for salvation. Thus, positively making clear about the path and negatively saving from hindrances. Dadaji call this state as a 'Shuklajnana'. He says that, with the help of the stability of mind, the prajna solve the inner problems and drag a soul towards itself. This state is called 'Shukla Jnana'. This way, Prajna functions internally as well as externally with the development of prajna, the external behaviour will also change and thereby inner self will also develop.

Prajna is undivided part of a soul. Prajna constantly functioning for the salvation of a soul. At the state of Salvation (Siddhakshetra) there is no function of Prajna. He says to his disciple that when I give you the initiation of Swarupa Jnana, I evoke Prajna in you. Then this Prajna will make you alert in every moment. This Akram Jnana will make you Jagruta. (Aware)

10 | INTELLECT AND KNOWLEDGE

Intellect is that which knows what is impure, what is Ashubha, what is Shubha. That is the process of intellect and not of knowledge. The process of knowledge is the process of Intellect and not of knowledge (Prajna). The process of knowledge is the process of perceiving and knowing only the good and auspicious. But intellect will believe by mistake that what is an object of knowledge is the knower himself. 'I' is an object, which is considered as a knower. This is done by intellect. 'I' is always mingled with the intellect. Dadaji draw the attention towards the mistake of knowing

All worldly processes are impermanent. while Prajna-bhave is permanent and everlasting. When prajnaabhave emerges, a soul will immediately achieve the highest state of soul. (Kshiprat Bhavati Dharmatma - Geeta)

All mental modifications other than prajna are called 'Bhavabhava'. (The feelings of likes and dislikes). All these feelings are impermanent. The Prajna-bhava is above dualism. But it is not a natural characteristic of a soul. Pajna itself is steady and permanent. But while soul gets salvation (Kevala Jnana), the prajna will be merged.

Dadaji gives an argument that if you consider prajna as Atmabhava, then it will become the undivided part of a soul. Then, we will have to accept that in the state of salvation, the soul will have the Prajna. But this is not the case. In the process of knowledge as the process of an intellect, which is, according to him a great obstacle in the path of salvation. He says that the intellect will never know the object as an object and a knower as a knower. It is impossible for intellect to have such a distinct perception. That is why, an intellect cannot perceive the truth.

That is why Dadaji says that, "I am the Mahavira of Jainas, Shri Krishna of Vaishnavas, Sahajananda of Swaminarayanists, Jesus of Christians, Zarathrustra of Parsis and Allah of Muslims. I am the origin of Divinity.

11 | EXPANSION OF MOVEMENT

Between 1962 and 1968, very few close people received "knowledge" through Dada Bhagwan. Following 1968, he bestowed "knowledge" who requested to be blessed. This is the foundation of the

movement. He said that he was initially reluctant due to fear of public opinion as in case of Shrimad Rajchandra but after his visit to a Rishabha temple in Khambhat he decided to public performance of Gnanvidhi, a practice to transfer of "knowledge" for self-realisation. In 1968, the first Gnanvidhi was held at Bombay. Over the years, the Gnanvidhi became more elaborate and achieved its present form in 1983. He continued to give spiritual discourses all over the world. He emphasized contact of "knower" (jnani) to gain knowledge over scriptural or ritual knowledge. His followers were initially spread in his hometown Vadodara and Bombay. The movement expanded in the 1960s and 1970s to southern Gujarat and Maharashtra and in Gujarati diaspora in East Africa, North America and UK. In 1983, he had reportedly around 50,000 followers. When he died on 2 January 1988, his funeral was attended by about 60000 followers. (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dada_Bhagwan)

12 | SUCCESSION IN THE MOVEMENT

Jay Sachchidanand Sangh, the major organisation of Akram Vignan movement, was founded under the auspices of Dada Bhagwan in Mumbai. Khetsi Narsi Shah, head of local Dada Bhagwan Vitarag Trust, was appointed as the first sanghpati, the community leader of it. He was succeeded by G. A. Shah of Ahmedabad. The organisation manages activities, community funds and supervises building activities along with the publication of books and magazine, Akram Vignan (first published in 1979). Now the organisation is led by local sanghpatis in Ahmedabad, Surat, Mumbai, London and US.

Soon after the death of Dada Bhagwan, the movement split into two factions. One led by Kanubhai Patel and backed by Jay Sachchidanand Sangh and other led by Niruben Amin. Niruben claimed that she was instructed and trained in Gnanvidhi by Dada Bhagwan. Niruben formed her own organisations; Dada Bhagwan Foundation Trust and Simandhar Swami Aradhana Trust in Ahmedabad and Mahavideh Foundation in Mumbai. She became a popular leader of the movement and was addressed as Niruma by her followers from 1999.[1][3] After death of Niruben in 2006, she was succeeded by Deepakbhai Desai.

Kanubhai Patel, also known as Kanudada, was close to Dada Bhagwan before 1978. He claims succession and presents a recorded tape in which he had instructed about it. He is seen as future Tirthankara by his many followers. His fraction refers their teaching of Akram Vignan as Vitrag Vignan.

Dada Bhagwan has authored the following books now translated in English:

- Who Am I ?; ISBN 978-81-89725-10-5
- Generation Gap; ISBN 978-81-89725-18-1
- Harmony In Marriage; ISBN 978-81-89725-15-0
- Life Without Conflict; ISBN 978-81-89725-21-1
- Anger; ISBN 978-81-89725-04-4
- Worries; ISBN 978-81-89725-05-1
- The Science Of Karma; ISBN 978-81-89725-11-2
- Life Without Conflict; ISBN 978-81-89725-21-1

(Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dada_Bhagwan)

REFERENCES

- (Dr.) Amin J P and Patel Lalabhai D. (Ed.), (2018), Jagatana Vidyamana Pramukha Dharmono Saransha, Vitarag Vignan Charitable Research Foundation, Surat. ISSN : 978-81-935155-5-6
- (Dr.) Shah Rajanikant (Tr.), (2018), Sarvangi Jivan Darshana Vijnana (Purvardha), Vitarag Vignan Charitable Research Foundation, Surat. ISSN : 978-81-935155-6-3

(Dr.) Shah Rajanikant (Tr.), (2018), Sarvangi Jivan Darshana Vijnana (Uttarardha), Vitarag Vignan Charitable Research Foundation, Surat. ISSN : 978-81-935155-8-7

Dada Bhagwan (2 April 2015). Adjust Everywhere: Conflict Resolution. Dada Bhagwan Aradhana Trust. pp. 5-10. ISBN 978-81-89725-00-6.

Dialogues With Dadaji on Life and Living (2016), Vitarag Vignan Charitable Research Foundation, Surat. ISSN : 978-81-908626-7-7

Flugel Peter (2005). King, Anna S.; Brockington, John (eds.). Present Lord: Simandhara Svami and the Akram Vijnan Movement (PDF). *The Intimate Other: Love Divine in the Indic Religions*. New Delhi: Orient Longman. pp. 194-243. ISBN 9788125028017.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dada_Bhagwan (Ref. 1-5 are from this website)

Jani, Suresh B. (2011-06-29). "Dada Bhagwan - Ambalal Muljibhai Patel" (Gujarati). *Gujarati Pratibha Parichay (in Gujarati)*. Retrieved 2017-03-21.

John, Paul (10 May 2012). "The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has christened a stretch on SP Ring road and a circle after a revered saint Dada Bhagwan. The standing committee passed a resolution on Thursday renaming the stretch between Visat crossroads and Sabarmati crossroads as Pujya Dada Bhagwan road while the Zundal circle has been named as Dada Bhagwan circle". *The Times of India*. Retrieved 21 March 2017.

Shah Jayantibhai, (Tr.-(Dr.) Shah Rajanikant S. (2018), Sarvangi Jivannu Rahasya, Vitarag Vignan Charitable Research Foundation, Surat. ISSN : 978-81-935155-9-4

Wiley, Kristi L. (17 June 2009). The A to Z of Jainism. Scarecrow Press. pp. 167-168. ISBN 978-0-8108-6337-8.

Author's Biography:

Dr. Dyuti Yajnik, an esteemed scholar in the field of philosophy, boasts a profound expertise in Epistemology encompassing both Indian and Western traditions, alongside a profound interest in Philosophy of Science and Moral Philosophy, particularly Axiology. With an extensive teaching career spanning over 34 years, comprising 12 years as a part-time lecturer and 22 years as a full-time professor, Dr. Yajnik has made substantial contributions to academia. Her research endeavors are equally impressive, with a notable repertoire of 30 published papers, 1 authored book, and contributions to 3 book chapters, complemented by an extensive array of 34 invited lectures and 28 paper presentations. As a mentor, she has successfully guided 9 Ph.D. candidates to completion and has 3 more submissions underway. Dr. Yajnik's academic prowess has been duly recognized through various accolades, including being a Gold Medalist in B.A. and M.Phil. at the university level, as well as receiving prestigious awards such as the Best Paper Awards from Gujarat Tattvijnana Parishad, Akhil Bharatiya Darshan Parishad, and the International Psychology Conference. Beyond academia, Dr. Yajnik has cultivated interests in music and dance, having dedicated 3 years to learning both Sitar and Kathak, respectively, showcasing a well-rounded personality.

How Cite this article?

Yajnik, D. (2024). Dada Bhagwan's Insight on Intellect. *Revista Review Index Journal of Multidisciplinary*, 4(1), 30-36. <https://doi.org/10.31305/rrijm2024.v04.n01.004>