

Ego and Dualities August 7, 2011 – Garry Jacobs

1) Why is that success does not last?

- a. A project manager succeeded gloriously last year and now wonders why he could not repeat it.
- b. Everything was going wonderfully for Mrs. Bennet until suddenly Bingley ran away.
- c. Every devotee has experienced miraculous initial success only to find it could not be retained or repeated. Why?
- d. That is also the experience of most high achievers – Churchill, Indira
- e. Success and Failure are opposites that always seem to go together
- f. Why does one inevitably follow on the other?
- g. Sri Aurobindo gives the answer in this chapter – the answer is EGO

2) Ego claims credit

- a. When do we succeed?
 - We succeed when we develop and exercise our capacities properly and make a sincere and exhaustive effort.
 - Capacity and effort accomplish.
- b. But once we succeed, ego creeps in to take credit.
- c. **EGO claims credit for what is achieved by effort, capacity or Grace --**
 - That is where the trouble starts.
 - I did that. I am great. I am talented. I am deserving.
 - Ego always believes the best of itself.
- d. The moment ego claims credit for success, it invites disappointment, misfortune and failure.
- e. Ego blissfully ignores the contribution of other people, which is often the main contribution.
- f. Mrs. Bennet prematurely celebrates Jane's engagement to Bingley, meanly gloating and triumphing over Lady Lucas. Soon after she is devastated when Collins gets engaged to Charlotte.
- g. Fitzwilliam tells Eliza that Darcy feels a triumph when he saves Bingley from an unfortunate marriage. Soon after his ego is crushed when Eliza tells him he is the "last man" she would ever marry.
- h. **Even when man succeeds, he succeeds because he has held ego in abeyance, NEVER because of his ego.**

- i. This is why initial success is so hard to maintain. It is a danger signal that warns us ego will try to spoil things next time around.
- j. Unfortunately, most devotees look to Mother to boost their ego and prove that they are extraordinary.
- k. It is not we who are extraordinary. It is Mother.
- l. It is not our ego that we should ask Mother to boost. It is our soul, our Psychic Being.

3) Our Dualities

- a. Success and failure is only one of our common problems
- b. Our lives are also characterized by suffering, evil, limitation, and death
- c. **Our lives consist of dualities – every positive comes with its opposite**
 - pleasure and pain
 - knowledge and ignorance
 - good and evil
 - joy and suffering
 - life and death.
- d. Jane's disappointment when Bingley leaves Netherfield
- e. Mr. Collins' humiliation when Elizabeth refuses him
- f. Darcy's pain when Eliza rejects him at Hunsford is very real to him
- g. Elizabeth's sense of helplessness when Lydia elopes
- h. Lady Catherine's outrage when Darcy proposes to Eliza
 - pollution of Pemberley, death of her family line
- i. Are these dualities inevitable?

4) According to ancient Vedanta

- a. All is Brahman
- b. Brahman is Sachchidananda**

5) According to later Vedanta

- a. Ego is the creator**
- b. There is no escape from the dualities in life**

6) Sri Aurobindo

- a. All is Sachchidananda
- b. Brahman is the Omnipresent Reality.
 - Becoming and Being

- Universe and Superconscious
- Finite appearances and formless Infinite
- Many and One

7) If all is Sachchidananda, why do these dualities appear in our lives?

- Because ego distorts the way we experience SACHCHIDANANDA – we experience it as dualities
- Ego converts the Omnipresent Reality into the dualities
- Death, suffering, evil, limitation are creations of a distorting and dividing consciousness
- We have fallen from the total and unifying knowledge into division and partial experience -- the fall of man from Garden of Eden

8) Life Divine gives the solution

- When ego dissolves, life continues.
- Dissolving ego, dualities are reconciled.
- Transformation eliminates dualities.

9) What is ego?

- Temporarily deformative factor
- Self-limitation of consciousness by a *willed* ignorance of the rest of the play
- Exclusive absorption in one form, one combination of tendencies, one field of the movement of energies
- Ego is that in us which **reacts**, shrinks, desires, fears
- Ego is a mechanism which allows the One to emerge as the conscious Many out of the formless subconscious
- Our sense of separation, difference, division
- That which feels important and superior
- That which urges, desires, reacts, prides, triumphs

10) How are dualities created?

- Dualities arise because ego tries to realize unity artificially, exclusive of the total truth, good, life and delight of being in the universe
- Dualities are created by the **self-limitation** of ego
- Darcy wants to keep himself separate from people
- Caroline wants to look down on others and feel superior
- Mrs. Bennet wants to triumph over Lady Lucas
- The Title is *Pride & Prejudice* – all about ego
- We create our own suffering

- Darcy creates his own pain by calling Eliza tolerable
- Kitty feels pain when Lydia goes to Brighton because she is selfish
- Wickham rejects the help offered to him by Darcy and attempts to elope with Georgiana
- Lizzy's attraction to Wickham's falsehood leads to Lydia's elopement

11) To Sachchidananda, Dualities are only reverse terms, shadow forms of their luminous opposites

- Shadow is created by the relative absence of light – it is not the opposite
- Ignorance is concealment of knowledge
- Limitation is concealment of power
- Suffering comes from being cut off from our greater self – a man lives only for himself and finds himself neglected by others, lonely --DARCY
- Death is an appearance of the form, not the essence – essence is immortal

12) The dualities come to help us overcome ego

- Discord helps us overcome separation to arrive at harmony and unity
- Darcy's pride and Eliza's prejudice help each to evolve
- Wickham's slander helps Darcy become a better man
- Lydia's elopement helps Eliza give up the attachment to Wickham's falsehood
- Darcy's interference with Bingley's marriage helps Bingley develop strength of enduring affection
- If these things can help their opposites to emerge, they cannot really be opposites – they are essential complements for our limitation.

13) Problems come because we separate ourselves, detach from the world around us.

- Man wants a one-way street – all roads lead to me, but none lead away
- In our selfish egoism, we want all the benefits and to give nothing in return
 - We want better roads but no taxes
 - Miser only profits when he lends his money to others
 - Spiritual knowledge cannot be hoarded – it vanishes
- We have to **overcome the false sense of separation** – an illusion of ego
 - Darcy cannot be happy without Elizabeth
 - England's aristocracy cannot shun the lower classes
- In practice, the more we give, the more we get**
 - Our knowledge grows by giving
 - Our wealth multiplies by spending

14) Conflict and problems helps you make progress

- a. Most devotees have come to Mother to solve a problem
- b. Mother is not hear to solve our problems
- c. She has come for our spiritual progress – for supramental transformation
- d. Problems are a means to awaken us our Faith, Aspiration and Devotion to the Higher Self and Divine Truth
- e. Most of us forget Mother when the problem is solved
- f. We accept the result and forget the cause – the knowledge gained
- g. Suppose Eliza thanks Darcy for saving Lydia and the whole affair is over – she fails to realize WHY Darcy saved Lydia – it was to win Elizabeth. Lydia was only the means.

15) Ego is the source of all our problems

- a. Ego separates us from the world around us, making us feel helpless to influence it
- b. We depend on life as something separate from ourselves, we are determined by Life
- c. What the ego seek evades us – Mrs Bennet seeks Bingley, Darcy seeks Eliza
- d. What the ego expects gets delayed – Mrs. Bennet’s expectations cancel
- e. What the ego fears seeks us – Lydia elopes with Wickham
- f. What ego demands resists – Eliza resists Lady C
- g. What the ego dominates rebels – Eliza rebels against Mrs B
- h. What the ego offends reacts – Darcy’s tolerable
- i. What the ego rejects returns – Darcy rejects Wickham

16) All we have and all we achieve is the gift of society (our universal)

- a. It took man 100,000s years to discover language, agriculture, the wheel, fire, use of medicinal plants
- b. Our spiritual knowledge evolved over 5000 years
- c. Our science and education is the cumulative knowledge of centuries of discover and thought from the time of Ancient Greece
- d. The Romans could not multiply or divide without Hindu numerals
- e. No computers without the Hindu discover of zero
- f. None of us can live by or for ourselves even if we want to
 - Our thoughts come from outside and go to the world
 - We constantly receive and send vibrations

17) What is the solution?

- a. Redemption comes by recovery of the universal in the individual and the spiritual term in the physical
- b. Universalization overcomes ego – move to psychic – harmonizes and reconciles dualities in totality
 - Totality is a reversion to harmony and reconciliation of opposites
- c. Transcendence transmutes opposites into divine unity
 - It effaces the opposites

18) We must relate the individual to the harmony of the totality

a. How do we move from the egoistic to non-egoistic viewpoint?

- b. Take any situation and imagine the non-egoistic viewpoint
 - Mrs. Bennet should realize Eliza can never marry Collins – he would have chosen Mary
 - Darcy should realize that Jane is the perfect wife for Bingley
 - Lady Catherine should realize that Darcy can never marry Lady Anne
- c. Key is to move from ego to discover the psychic being – evolving soul in Nature
 - Non-reaction
 - Non-initiative
 - Take the other man's point of view
 - Self-forgetfulness
 - Self-giving
- d. Darcy does it by
 - he gives up his class consciousness
 - he gives up his selfish personal motives
 - He saves Lydia
 - he helps his enemy

19) Eliminating ego converts crisis into opportunity

- a. We seem to make progress only when we have difficulties and crises
- b. Crises generate intensity, but it is painful because we resist the intensity and try to defend our position
- c. We receive the pressure narrowly into a separate surface self
- d. We put up an immovable barrier, a wall against life
- e. To universalize means to let the intensity pass through us, converting it into intense energy
- f. Martial arts – uses the enemies momentum
- g. Steering a sailboat against or with the wind**

h. Darcy does it when Eliza abuses him at Hunsford

20) Dualities are not inevitable

- a. The way in which we experience Life results from ego
- b. Not the only possible way, not the complete and right and ultimate formula
- c. There are sense organs that see the world differently and better than we do
 - horse sees in the dark
 - dog hears what we do not

21) Other States of Consciousness

- a. There are other states of consciousness -- mental and supramental ways to experience the world
- b. Pain is a violent backwash of waters of universal delight
 - Jane's disappointment prepares her for greater joy
 - Darcy loves Eliza more because she rejected his imperfection
 - When joy becomes too intense -- I laughed so hard I cried
 - This is too good to be true
 - I cannot bear this joy -- Othello
 - Sri Aurobindo converted the scorpion's sting into ananda
- c. Limitation is a turning of the Infinite upon itself
 - Failure is a preparation for greater success
 - Every great entrepreneur knows that he benefitted most by his failures
 - Darcy imposed a limitation on his interests, then he rejected limitation
 - Mr Bennet refused to take responsibility for his family. Later he changed
- d. Evil is a circling of good around its own perfection
 - Wickham's evil helps make Darcy perfect
 - Lydia's elopement helps Darcy prove the depths of his love
- e. Death is only a change in immortal Life
 - Death is dissolution of the form, liberating the essence to reincarnate
 - Without death, nothing would ever change
 - women would be confined to the kitchen, spinning khadi and committing sati
 - it would still be a sin to leave India

- our houses would be terribly crowded with old people – no space to walk – imagine trying to decide which TV channel to watch
- India would still be a colony
- Death of monarchy is birth of democracy
 - Death of Moghul India and British India is birth of independent India
- Death is only of the form
- Death enables the soul to acquire a new form when the old one can no longer make progress
- Death makes life immortal

22) The practical values of our senses have a meaning

- a. We should not abandon them prematurely or rationalize them
- b. The dualities present us a **partial truth – not an illusion**
- c. Lydia's elopement is a tragedy when it happens – we cannot say it does not matter
- d. Elizabeth's rejection of Darcy is sincere – he cannot ignore it the way Collins does
- e. Jane's abandonment is very real – she may never get another proposal – no sense telling her it is a good thing
- f. But they are not final
- g. **Gita warns us not to disturb the values and beliefs of others**

23) Essential vs. Secondary Causes

- a. To solve the problems of life generated by the dualities, secondary measures are not sufficient
- b. We must shift from secondary perceptions to root-knowledge
- c. Education, job, money, marriage, children are secondary
- d. The real key to prosperity, happiness, health and fulfillment requires essential knowledge – **knowledge of how to convert dualities into their higher counterparts.**
- e. That is the key to Divine Life

24) Our viewpoint is reverse of reality

- a. We need to **change our view**
- b. For the senses, **the sun moves around the earth** – earth is the center – truth is the opposite
- c. For the **ego, life and God move around us** – Mother serves us

d. We judge everything from our egoistic personal point of view

- For Darcy, Georgiana marrying Wickham is disaster
 - For Eliza, Bingley should marry Jane not Georgiana
 - For Caroline, Darcy should marry her not Eliza
 - For Eliza, Lydia's elopement is tragedy
- e. They may be practically useful values, but they are not ultimate truths
- Today Prince William marries Kate Middleton – her parents were once flight attendants – imagine what Lady Catherine would have said!
 - It is true Mrs. Bennet is vulgar. It is also true that Lady Catherine has the same consciousness.
 - Elopement is common now. In May 1782, the Earl of Westmoreland and Sarah Anne Child decided to elope to Gretna Green.

25) Truth is the Divine is the center, not ego

- a. Experience of the individual is only true in terms of the universal and transcendent
- b. Lady Catherine's disappointment is personal – for England Eliza's wedding is a great evolutionary progress
- c. It is right Darcy pays Wickham to marry Lydia
 - he helped Darcy make progress
 - It serves an evolutionary purpose for society
- d. Look at P&P from the **perspective of society** rather than each character
- e. Look at the progress of our family in terms of the **development of India**, not our personal benefit
- f. Ask not what you can get from the world and others, but what you can give to them, asking nothing in return – Darcy did it
- g. Ask how you can serve Mother and give yourself to Her, not how She can serve you – all happiness and prosperity will come to you
- h. Thy Will, not my will.

26) Abolish of the egoistic values – self-importance, selfishness, possessiveness, competitiveness, jealousy, superiority, domination.

- a. Wickham – accepting responsibility for his actions by marrying Lydia
- b. Elizabeth – detachment from false appearances however pleasing it may be and seeking for truth and goodness
- c. Lady Catherine – giving up arrogant self-assertiveness for narrow self-interest (think from Darcy's point of view)

- d. Mr. Bennet – take responsibility for the family, act out of highest sense of honor (do what is right not merely what is possible or convenient)
- e. Darcy – accepting consciousness responsibility for other's misdeeds by identification with the welfare of the society
- f. By transcending ego, we transcend limitation, ignorance, suffering, evil and death – Darcy is immortal hero, true lover

27) This transcendence of dualities is possible

- a. Life is not individual phenomenon, but universal
- b. Limitation, death and suffering are not inevitable
- c. Difficult for us to imagine human potential and our future destiny – like the Arboreal Ape
- d. Ancient Vedanta presents the solution
- e. Brahman is the one and universal essential fact
- f. Sachchidananda is the nature of Brahman
- g. Essence of all Life is a movement of universal and immortal existence
- h. Essence of all sensation is the play of a universal and self-existent delight in being
- i. Essence of all thought and perception is the radiation of a universal and all-pervading truth
- j. Essence of all activity is the progression of a universal and self-effecting good

28) Rediscover the right relation eliminates the ego-determined reactions -- dualities

- a. Right participation of the individual in the consciousness of the totality and in the consciousness of the transcendent which the totality represents
- b. Wickham must rejoin society
- c. Mr. Bennet must take responsibility for his family
- d. Darcy must take responsibility for all
- e. **Consecration is the method**