

# Knowledge & Ignorance in Life Divine & P&P

GJ Web-ex Talk on June 5, 2011

## I. Introduction

### A. Unknowable

- Tradition says the Reality is unknowable.
  - Sri Aurobindo says Reality cannot be known by Mind.
  - Mind is an instrument of Ignorance.
  - But Reality can be known by Supermind.
- Unknowable formulates itself to human consciousness (mind) and then withdraws.
  - It comes to us according to what we are – our ignorance
- Mind makes the infinite finite – it removes the infinite sense in the event.

### B. Life Divine

- Book I is Omnipresent Reality & the Universe
- Book II is The Knowledge & the Ignorance: Spiritual Evolution
  - The Infinite Consciousness and the Ignorance
  - The Knowledge and Spiritual Evolution
- Why does LD present creation in terms of K & I?
- Why not pain and ananda? Life and death? Good and evil?
- This is true of the spiritual tradition as well.

### C. Tradition views universe as a creation of mind

- Knowledge is faculty of mind
- Tradition mistook Mind for the Creator and called Brahma, an overmental God, the creator
- Creation ends in Mind. Life & Matter are merely extensions of Mind.
- Knowledge is the primary action of Mind.
- Supermind is the real Creator
- Supermind has created Ignorance in order to render the Infinite in finite terms.
- In reality, Creation is an exercise in Delight of Existence
- Involution and evolution are the means for the process
- Ignorance is a means to intensify the experience of self-finding delight

#### D. Spiritual evolution means evolution from Ignorance to Knowledge

- Eliza came to a great spiritual realization at Hunsford when she read Darcy's letter.
- She realized she had been completely wrong about Darcy and Wickham
- She realized her behavior had been absurd
- She said I never knew myself till now
- Hopefully by examining the forms of Ignorance we can make a similar spiritual progress.
- We need not be shy of confessing our ignorance. It is the basic universal human condition. No exceptions.
- At the same time, that means whenever we say "I am right. I know. You are totally wrong -- like Eliza we are announcing to the world our own ignorance.

#### E. Let us examine the various types of human ignorance.

### II. Sense mind

#### A. The data of the senses is our first means of emerging from ignorance

- We rely on the data from our five senses
- Conventional wisdom extols the value of sense data
  - I know what I saw.
  - I know what I heard.
  - I will believe it when I see it. – Rs 100 crores
  - If that were possible it would have already happened.
- Insistence on the sense data is to insist on the physical consciousness.
- Yet often we come to wrong conclusions by simply ignoring or overlooking simple facts
  - Sherlock Holmes – cigar ash, muddy footprint – dog didn't bark
  - Mr. Bennet – even a fool should have known better than to send a wild 15 year girl like Lydia to a camp of officers with red coats
- How often we jump to conclusions that are totally wrong based on one or a few incomplete facts?
  - Vasanthi did not remove the tumbler
  - Because Darcy stares often at Eliza, she thinks he is condemning her in his mind.

#### B. The most basic type of ignorance is to take external appearances for the reality.

- We view the external world through our senses and sense mind
- One of the earliest discoveries of man is that the sense data is not reliable.
- Bent pencil

### C. Science has discovered the limitation of the senses

- Matter is not solid and motionless
- Copernicus

### D. Our senses constantly deceive us

- We ask a person to do something and they nod 'yes' – does not mean they will do it.
- We ask if someone agrees with us
- Collins knew that truth – he refused to believe Eliza's refusal to marry him
- Lizzy refused to believe Charlotte when she said Collins had proposed to her the very next day. Impossible!

### E. Sense knowledge is blind to content

- Lady Catherine took Lizzy as a young woman she could dominate over

### F. To 'take leave of one's senses' means to go mad. Actually all wisdom comes when we leave the senses behind us.

### G. Sense data has to be interpreted by the reason in order to be useful

## III. Limitations of the mixed reason

### A. The data from the senses is always inadequate to know reality

### B. Therefore, when reason bases itself on sense data, it is prone to serious errors.

### C. He calls this the mixed reason

### D. Mixed reason often mistakes appearances for reality, form for content

- We judge people by the clothes they wear
  - Darcy's eyes see Lizzy as tolerable because no one is dancing with her
- Worse still, we judge ourselves by the clothes we wear (car, house) and think we are better or worse than others on that basis
  - Think how outraged the British were when Gandhi came to England in dhoti or commonly dressed in loin cloth
  - They later found out that clothes do not make the person
- Darcy's staring misinterpreted by Eliza
- Eliza sees Wickham as good because he is handsome
  - Any man that handsome must be good

E. **Withdrawing from the senses, mixed reason becomes pure reason**

**IV. Mind can argue any side**

A. **Even the pure reason is an instrument of Ignorance, not Knowledge**

B. **It divides reality into small parts.**

C. **It cannot know the whole.**

D. **It cannot know the essential truth.**

E. **Reason can argue any side of a truth as valid – any philosophy**

F. **Mind knows its own analysis**

G. **There is Truth in every mental viewpoint**

- **Every strongly felt principle has a truth behind it**
- **“Wherever there is an extreme statement that makes such a powerful appeal to the human mind, we may be sure we are standing in the presence of no mere error, superstition, hallucination, but of some sovereign fact disguised which demands our fealty and will avenge itself if denied or excluded.” Reality Omnipresent.**

H. **Task of mind is to give confidence to the soul for action**

I. **Mr. Bennet can justify Lydia’s trip to Brighton**

J. **Collins’ justifies his proposal to Eliza – my reasons for marrying, you may never get another proposal**

K. **There is always truth on both sides**

- **Wickham’s view of Darcy has a truth behind it – D’s arrogance**
- **Eliza wants Bingley to marry Jane. Caroline wants him to marry Georgiana**
- **Darcy’s pride vs Eliza’s prejudice**

- L. Can we conceive and concede that those we vehemently disagree with are equally right?

## V. Faith in Mind

### A. First rule of Psychic Education

- Shifting reliance from the mind's externalized way of seeing things

### B. Reliance on mind breeds many types of Superstition

- Reliance on money – Collins' and Darcy's proposals to Eliza
- Reliance on our own capacity
  - Mrs Bennet's scheming initiatives
  - Pavitra's capacity to convince the Pondy border guard to do the right thing
- Reliance on goodness of others – Jane
- Reliance on our position – Lady Catherine demands Eliza's obedience
- What superstitions do YOU believe in?

### C. For many, our faith is in our understanding, not in Mother

- Therefore their prayers are not answered
- Grace comes to them in other ways

### D. Our first response to events should be consecration not understanding

## VI. Vedantic knowledge

### A. Withdrawing from thought, reason becomes intuition

### B. Charlotte sees that Darcy is in love

### C. Eliza refrains from exposing Darcy to Jane

### D. Darcy confides in Elizabeth about Georgiana's elopement

### E. Elizabeth confides in Darcy about Lydia's elopement and later her mind regrets it.

## VII. Constitutional Ignorance

### A. We are ignorant of the real constitution of our being

- Mental, vital, physical and spiritual
- Each part of our being is ignorant of the others and acts independently

**B. First, we give inordinate importance to the physical -- needs, sensations, possessions and actions**

- We are preoccupied with the body and the outer material things
  - Comfort, pleasure, taste of food
  - Money, shopping, mixes, ipods and iphones etc. – which can never be the source of happiness and fulfilment.
- We mistake our actions or behavior for reality
  - Saying thank you is not gratitude – gratitude is an emotion
  - Making Pranams is not surrender
  - Sitting quietly thinking of our problems is not prayer or meditation

**C. Second, we base our reason on our vital preferences**

- Mr Bennet justifies sending Lydia to Brighton
- Eliza likes Wickham and therefore justifies him and even thinks of marrying him. She is in the vital
- Mrs. Gardiner counsels Eliza to shift from vital to mental in regard to Wickham

**D. Third, we mistake our thoughts for reality of our being**

- Goodwill is not a mere thought. It is an emotion
- Faith is not a thought.
- Saying Mother “Thy Will be Done” when all the time our vital wants Mother to surrender and give us what we want is not surrender.

**E. Fourth, all the parts of our being are at war with one another**

- Darcy’s mind and vital war over proposal to Eliza

**VIII. Psychological Ignorance**

**A. We are ignorant of the depths of our being – Subconscious, Subliminal, Superconscious, Circumconscious, Psychic**

**B. In its simplest form, this means lack of self-awareness**

**C. We do not see and know ourselves the way others see us**

- 10<sup>th</sup> man
- Who is to blame? Mrs Bennet and Mrs Philips see only others.
- Collins does not see he is foolish
- Mr. Bennet laughs at others and does not see his own conduct is laughable.

#### D. To know ourselves the way others know us is a major step from Ignorance to Knowledge

- Few have the courage to ask others
- Fewer have the sincerity to accept what they hear
- Our worst enemies do us a service when they abuse us – even Her punishments are Grace
  - Wickham's abuse of Darcy is a falsehood that conceals a truth

#### E. We value ourselves as society values us according to social values rather than based on our deepest or highest spiritual potential

- We do not value the highest or best in us – therefore we get the results of our lower parts, not are highest potential
- Darcy values his wealth and superior status, does not know himself – he is lonely
- Darcy judges Eliza by her status and money, till he discovers her strength of character, goodness and individuality and eventually sees her soul

### IX. Egoistic Ignorance

#### A. Reason is dominated by Ego

- Darcy is proud of his status, unconscious of his own soul

#### B. Egoistic Ignorance is ignorance of other's point of view

- Collins and Darcy when they propose to Eliza
- Eliza rejects Caroline's warning about Wickham's character, but accepts Mrs. Gardiner's warning about marrying him.

#### C. Universalizing overcomes egoistic ignorance

- Darcy universalizes

### X. Temporal ignorance

#### A. We are lost in the moment

- Acting on impulse without thought of the consequences
- Wickham's elopement with Lydia

#### B. Repeating past follies over and over

- Mrs. Bennet invites Bingley to dinner again

#### C. Forgetting the past – it repeats

- Darcy fails to anticipate Wickham may elope again

#### D. Unconscious of the future

- Savitri: “Here where one knows not even the step in front, and Truth has her throne on the shadowy back of doubt”
- Eliza to Darcy: “You are the last man I could marry”
- Eliza to herself: “I’ll never see him again”

#### E. How to overcome the temporal ignorance?

- Consecrate the past
- Consecrate every act
  - Consecrating an act can change events that have already occurred
  - To believe that a physical event can be reversed by consecration drives me “take leave of my senses

### XI. Cosmic Ignorance

#### A. Ignorance of Causality

- Mistaking effect for cause
  - Eliza regrets having told Darcy about Lydia’s elopement
  - We energize the opposition by attention
- Tree and the seed, cosmos, GOD

#### B. Reason cannot know the Infinite

- Man’s soul seeks to discover the Infinite and express it in finite life – Rs 100 crores
- Reason can know only the finite

#### C. Reason can never be a master of life because it can never know the infinite possibilities of the Subconscient and the Superconscient

- Lizzy cannot understand what Darcy sees in her -- suprarational
- Neither Lizzy or Darcy can image Lydia’s elopement at the hour of fulfillment -- infrarational

#### D. That is why we must withdraw faith in the mind’s externalized way of seeing.

- Eliza and Darcy can never imagine meeting at Pemberley
- Infinite is unknowable, inexpressible, unpredictable
- Infinite never moves but it is always a step in front

#### E. For Divine, anything is possible!

- Lizzy’s marriage to Darcy is called impossible by Jane and Mr. Bennet



- What is impossible to the reason is possible to the higher knowledge

## **XII. Original Ignorance**

### **A. The secret of knowledge is it is the light of self-existence**

- Not any mental formulation of thought or understanding
- Knowledge is Knowledge of the Being which is oneself
- God is not merely an impersonal Truth. It is a Being

### **B. Original Ignorance is not the ignorance of Sat, the Transcendent Being**

- Reason is ignorant of the Infinite in the Finite, the Unity of the Many, God in Nature.
- Reason looks up to the Absolute, outside to the Infinite, inside to the One.
- Rishis realized in mind and ego, saw Sat only as a part of divine not as the integral divine.
- The real knowledge is Knowledge by Identity
- Only through the psychic can one rise to the integral realization that unites relative and the absolute.

## **XIII. Subtle shortcuts -- Snakes and Ladders**

### **A. Ego is a snake that leads us deeper into the Ignorance**

### **B. Psychic is the ladder that leads us to Knowledge, Beauty and Delight**

### **C. Faith, Consecration and Surrender are the path to Knowledge**