

THE COMPARATIVE AND THE CREATIVE

I

I. 1 Every style or school of thought, including philosophy, has its guidelines and goals, its framework and points of reference. Even amongst the various branches of philosophy itself, this is equally applicable. We may wish to know, then, how to compare and contrast the worth of different approaches—besides, of course, deciding whether such an exercise is legitimate in the first place.

A wish such as this is not easy to fulfil. And we shall not endeavour to do so here. Our attempt, if at all, will be to suggest pointers and evaluate the propriety of a particular philosophical approach being considered superior or inferior to another. We consider such an exercise worthwhile because some thinkers are prone to deplore 'comparative' or 'synthesis-oriented' literature as 'inferior' research (or the concern of 'inferior' thinkers). They expound, instead, 'creative' or 'exhaustive one-text oriented' study. In what is to follow, our concern will be to examine, in some detail, how tenable is this argument.

I. 2 We are tempted to psychologize here. The basic skills needed for a comparative work are perseverance, studiousness and some amount of pedagogy. One can do without presenting anything refreshingly new. In fact the major effort involved here is in compilation of what others have written and juxtaposing one idea against another. Whatever chance for genius

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exists, thus, is only in how efficiently this is done and whether a significant trend or an important correlation can be pointed out. Obviously, therefore, mediocrity of various levels is very well suited for this type of work. It is essentially a matter of compilation, categorization, working over data already supplied by others. It can easily become a matter of basking in other's sunshine, a case of reflected glory.

The creative thinker, on the other hand, can be a good scholar, or may not. His ability lies in seeking something new and original, in himself and others. Anything pedantic or compilatory, however scholarly, cannot appeal to him if it lacks a thorough going originality or individuality. He is the planner, the policy-maker, the trend-setter; the boss with new ideas, the thinker with vision.

Thus, if the comparative worker is likened to the librarian, the creative worker is the writer of the books he categorizes. If the comparative worker is the efficient head clerk, secretary or accountant who keeps papers and records straight, the creative worker supplies the matter for these papers or records.

This is a ripe situation for the development of hierarchies or the hierarchical attitude of categorizing people. The visionary, the trend-setter considers himself superior to those who follow the vision or the trend. The boss considers himself one-up on his secretary or clerk. And the writer on the librarian.

We believe this simplified analogy can help understand why the so called creative worker considers his work and approach superior to the comparative or synthesis oriented one. To supply this formulation is not to attempt its justification, however. As we shall see presently, there is more to this issue than meets the psychologizing eye.

I. 3 We consider conducting a discussion of this nature important because such an attitude prevails amongst philosophical thinkers of all levels. Some are sceptical of the worth and relevance of comparisons and feel it is easy to be obsessed with it, seeking points of comparison where none may indeed exist. The joy of working out such commonality is a heady wine with which even the best of minds get dangerously intoxicated, something that results in blunting of critical faculties and an inevitable dementia of the intellect. This is indeed a potent argument. It must alert us to the pitfalls of tenuous comparisons, or the dangers of being enamoured of this approach. To that extent, it is valid for obsession with any trend of thought, desirable or otherwise.

I. 4 We shall briefly touch upon this argument later on. Our main concern will be, however, with one of the other trends of thought which is in a similar vein. It concerns those who find reverence for the old, or attempts at synthesis of thought (of the East and the West, for example) anathema to a proper creative attitude, implying thereby it is the latter which should be made one's goal; and the former not be allowed to act as a hindrance. A quotation from one of our thinkers will illustrate this point :

“Those who argue for synthesis (of approaches) seem to forget that achieving synthesis is *parasitic* on some one else's having produced the materials to be synthesised. Primary creativity consists in generating new ideas, initiating new methods of thinking etc. If synthesising some ideas given by some important Eastern or Western traditions, is to be called creative, it would be creative only in a secondary or *watered down* sense”.¹

We must take up this argument for a closer scrutiny and see if it withstands a battery of questions. No one can doubt that

“generating new ideas”, and “initiating new methods” are absolutely necessary for creativity. On the face of it, this is indisputable. Our concern will be with the ramifications of this creative attitude, especially those which may not be that desirable, to which we shall not direct our attention.

1.5 What makes us suppose that in every endeavour our major (if not sole) concern should be with searching, presenting or dealing with new ideas or methods? Because, if that be so, what happens to the existing ideas and methods, even those that the ‘creative’ person himself has used upto now? Should he go on discarding the old and seeking the new all the time? Or, does he go for the new but still keep some of the old? And if he does so, will it not involve for him a personal synthesis of thought and approaches that will be as important to further his search for the new, as to prevent destabilization and disintegration of his thinking faculties? Because a disjointed personal ideology can be present, but must also lead to fragmentation of thinking. And one wonders whether creativity of any worth can be the product of a fragmented intellect.

No doubt the creative mind needs, at times, to make departures that are radically different from the old, departures that may shake him, and others, from their very foundation by the force of their appeal or relevance. But that need not make us lament the worth of synthesis or comparison. Because even what has been created has to be ultimately incorporated, synthesised and compared; if not with, or for, others, at least for oneself.

In creativity of any worth, it is not new-ness or novelty which should be the major concern. That is only a reflection of attraction for the novel which is the major ploy and weakness of mediocrity. The concern, rather, should be with originality, of which novelty is but one attribute. It involves not just the presentation of ideas and concepts in a different light, but one which

affords a keener perspective and a better evaluation, understanding or analysis of well recognised works, theories or concepts. Only occasionally does it involve a totally different and radical departure. But it almost always involves the unfettered ability to get rid of the frills and fringes of an issue and concentrate on its basics or essentials – to get to the heart of the issue at stake. Thus, critical acumen of a high calibre becomes an essential attribute and this ability is constantly exercised in the context of others, works, whether in published form or for self-understanding. It must indeed be the rare originality which can function in pure isolation.

1.6 We must also consider another argument. If each thinker plans to give something new and 'creative' all the time, how will there be—or, rather, why should there be any point of communication between him and others? What you say may be new according to you, but my creative urge persuades me to be interested in what is new according to me. And this is exactly the breeding ground for isolated 'ivory-tower' philosophising that we must attempt to eschew. If we lament the fact that there is poor communication or understanding of works between contemporaries in India, especially amongst philosophers,^{2, 3} probably each thinker's obsession with giving something 'new' or 'created' by him all the time, is at its root. This isolated world-viewing is individuality in thinking carried to the extreme. And, if improperly implemented, it can retard rather than help development—and creativity itself.

Our argument, remember, is based on the pursuit of creativity which can cause alienation. We do not mean, thereby, that it must occur in every case. We are sure the creatively inclined can fruitfully combine with others of their kind, share notes, and further this important approach. However, they may, as a

group, also look down upon the comparative, dismissing them as being concerned only with old, out-moded concepts. While the former attitude is desirable, the latter is equally deplorable. Unfortunately, the two attitudes are not uncommonly present in the same thinker. A case of poor synthesis, perhaps ?

I. 7 Let us proceed further with our earlier quotation. We may accept that there indeed may be a 'primary' and a 'secondary' creativity, wherein the primary is something totally new and secondary that which is based on the old. Atleast secondary creative status is granted to a good comparative or synthesis-oriented work thereby. But why call it 'parasitism' or a 'watered-down' creativity ? Why should anything that is not totally new be automatically considered watered-down ? Or parasitic ? Parasites, we thought, fed on the host source and *debilitated* it. Could we not think in terms of a *symbiotic* relationship in which the creative genius of one needs the exploration of another to help it flower ? This, rather than being parasitic, may be the very manner in which the genius of both is made available to those who would otherwise have been deprived of it. The original thinker is important. But this need not detract from the value of the commentator or translator, or one who works out his worth in the context of others. And to consider him parasitic or watered-down would amount to grave injustice to say the least.

Classics do not get written every day. In fact, writers of classics are as well inspired by the works of others. Even they wish, besides presenting their original thoughts, to recapture the ideas of their preceptors, or earlier thinkers in the field. What should motivate us to consider such works, though secondarily creative, as watered-down ? We can refer here to Plato's *Dialogues*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Tulsidās or Kamban, the *Jñāneśvarī* of Santa Jñāneśvara, the philosophical commentaries of Śaṅkara,

Madhva and Rāmānuja, the *Nyāya-Bhaṣya* of Vātsyāyana or the *Nyaya-mañjarī* of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa. These works are not primarily creative. They are secondary in the sense of being based on another, primary, source. But we dare anyone to consider them watered-down just because they are secondary. Or, “parasitic on some one else’s having produced the materials” they have elaborated.

In stating certain thoughts, we may over-emphasize some points to make them more striking and, therefore, clear. The need to further creativity in thought, a laudable and worthy concept in itself, may make a writer acclaim it to the rejection/exclusion of another. But to prove oneself right, it is not always necessary to prove another wrong. And any overdoing of this nature not only causes confusion; it can inculcate, as a fall-out, improper attitudes amongst others who may, consciously or otherwise, get impressed thereby and decide to adopt it as their approach.

I. 8 All said and done, we must concede the distinct possibility that whereas one’s mediocrity can be concealed in a comparative study, it is easily revealed in a creative one. The moment anyone seeks a creative status, he makes himself liable to all sorts of probings, searchings and expectations. And mediocrity cannot withstand any of these. But, remember, mediocrity is also an expert at camouflage; and the mediocre thinker has no qualms about masquerading as a creative one by efficiently garbing old, inane thoughts in new attractive phraseology. Mediocrity sometimes also achieves this status by playing the inscrutable : it then becomes the eternal question of who will call the emperor naked.

Such second-rate work may be inadvertently granted the status of a genuinely creative one. And the work of a genius

may be passed over purely because it is of a comparative or synthesizing nature. We need to guard against the dangers of indulging in either.

Our concern is genuine research and thinking needs to be somewhat better organised. The mind which is allowed to wander freely in pursuit of creativity may chance upon a spring of nectar or an invaluable treasure allright. But it has more chances than not of being lost in a maze. The intellect needs some framework to work in, it needs a freedom that is restrained as well, which knows and works according to its limitations and its strengths. But more of that later.

Under such conditions, it is improper to blame or reject approaches. What we need to do is identify the proper and the improper in them, their strengths and shortcomings. And we need to do this about their followers and propounders too. Our intellectual task should, if at all, be limited to either a genuine appraisal or a faithful articulation. Intelligence does not permit the licence of intolerance.

II

II. 1 Let us proceed further by starting with another remark :

“(K. C.) Bhattacharya seems to have great fascination for synthesis, and his own philosophising exhibits his very serious and sincere efforts to achieve it in respect of some classical Indian, mainly Vedāntic, and some Western, philosophical, viewpoints, particularly metaphysical. But my feeling is that had (sic) he proceeded in a freer manner, without having been so impressed with the ideal of synthesis, his creativity would have soared to greater heights. Perhaps he would also have become a little more intelli-

ble. An undue regard for the ideal of synthesis has hindered some other, very competent and thorough scholars, like D. M. Datta and P. T. Raju, who had the necessary equipment, from making any significantly new departure in their philosophising. It is still one of the major causes of the lack of, or low creativity in, modern Indian philosophy. It is also responsible, when it becomes the obsession of poorer thinkers, for the prevalence of what is called comparative philosophy. "4

There is a hidden assumption (and a lament) here that both synthesis-oriented work and its later 'degeneration' – comparative philosophy – tends to warp the potential of even great minds (And by potential we mean creative potential and assume that that alone is of any worth).

II. 2 We must admire the concern and appreciate its genuineness. But we shall now come to this whole business of synthesis-oriented or comparative work being effort less worthy of accomplishment. Do we consider a person's "Creativity which soars to greater heights", or, "the ability to make significantly new departures in philosophising", the only proper concern of philosophers of any standing? Why do we expect every worthwhile philosopher to engage himself in creating something new alone? Why can he not also remodel or reevaluate the old in the light of the present, reorient us to classics, critically appraise us of contemporary currents in thinking, and compare them with each other? Why should he consider it below his caliber to do so? Why this prudish priggery, this snobbery that stifles objectivity?

We must reiterate that there indeed are many poorer thinkers who do "what is called comparative philosophy". But that does not mean there aren't equally poor thinkers who may wish others

(and themselves) to believe that they in fact do creative or original philosophy. And the poorer thinker anywhere has to be exposed for whatever is his worth. To castigate the need or worth of a particular approach because of the incompetence of some of its propounders cannot ever be a worthy exercise. Further, if we feel something has become the major domain of poorer thinkers, that is all the more reason better ones associate with it and weed out the decomposed and the decrepit.

II. 3 We must get certain perspectives straight. In a branch of thought where resolute and basic enquiries are our concern – and we wish to believe philosophy can still qualify for this status—we must not involve ourselves in a holier-than-thou attitude. Our concern, if at all, should be with following honestly whichever approach best suits our understanding and articulation, effectively brings to the fore the potentiality in each one of us, for individual and/or collective benefit, with the qualification that our approach does not automatically negate the worth of, or render inferior, all other similar or dissimilar approaches to the same or other issues (ofcourse provided we qualify this statement with the remark that the approach is pursued honestly). We have no need to despair that K. C. Bhattacharya, D. M. Datta and P. T. Raju (or, for that matter, Radhakrishnan, S. C. Chatterjee and M. Hiriyanna) followed a particular approach. Their genius lay in doing that well. Their genius probably would never have flowered doing anything radically new or creative. And we need regard them no less for not being able to do so.

II. 4 The *avant-garde* wholly new thinker is a dream. You have one in an age. But every age can definitely produce many worthwhile thinkers who know their capabilities as well as their limitations and try to give the best possible realising this. It is no use trying to fly with one's hands as one's wings. A man

born with wings would be a freak of nature, and such freaks may never be born. And a winged horse exists only in fables. But it is definitely possible for each one to know the span and grasp of his arms. And if we wish to soar high, we need either an aircraft or the skills of a hand-glider. Neither of these can be developed in isolation. They need, besides basic capability and a will to fly, the necessary training and the appliances. Only a proper study of others' works, in which context lies the value of synthesis-oriented and comparative works, can supply both the necessary equipment and the expertise.

When we talk of a certain approach warping somebody's potential and lament its occurrence, we assume it to be creative potential that is non-existent or suppressed, and this situation we consider unfortunate. No doubt creativity is worthwhile. But not to the exclusion of other potentials. And to most we may grant sufficient intelligence to be able to realise how much potential of which nature they have, and to be honest in its pursuit and expression. Further, the creative potential itself can find expression in various forms, not necessarily original writing or theorizing. Creativity of a high calibre can be as much expressed in a genuine comparative as a genuine original work. And we shall see later how.

II. 5 To lay down limitations does not necessarily mean to limit endeavours (in the meaning of hampering them). Any proper appraisal of effort must involve the former without involving the latter. When the champion weightlifter attempts a record weight, he decides to try one that is more than others allright, but knows fully well how much he can lift and how far he should go. He does not limit himself thereby : all that he does is knowing his limitations, he tries to reach his maximum possible limit. The moment he wishfully attempts to cross his limitations, not only does he make a fool of himself, he is also

liable to hurt himself badly in the bargain. And what applies to physical weight need not be inappropriate, in the present context, to the weight of ideas and concepts. After all, both deal with human endeavours and peak achievements.

We must lay down realistic limitations to our ambitions. To lay down limitations, properly done, means to be realistic in expectations, to set proper goals of achievement. Attempting to soar in creativity because of the ambition of heights can be disastrous without the capacity to sustain it. And one can be rudely jarred by the resultant fall. This can cause more personal hurt than the ridicule or scorn of others—it can result in disenchantment with long held convictions, in reaction formation, intellectual despair and, worse, ideological death.

II. 6 We must indeed understand that every style of thinking has a worth. And a limited goal and scope. This is applicable both to creative as well as comparative thinking much though the creative thinker may like to convince himself otherwise. Let us here present what basically is this worth :

- i) The person who creates seeks freedom of expression and hence experiments with various modes of articulation. Temporal correlation and consistency may be the hallmark (and the pursuit) of synthesis-oriented and tradition-bound work but it cannot act as a limiting factor to creativity. And yet, even for the creative there is a framework which he decides on, atleast for a particular point in time and in a particular context. He may consider himself free to reject it later, or to reaccept what he may have earlier rejected. But, at every point in time something akin to a framework must exist. This framework is wider, more elastic compared to others, and sometimes appears boundless. Agreed. However, in every case it cannot but exist.

Wherever it doesn't, there can only be, at best, a florid chaos.

- ii) The comparative thinker, on the other hand, uses his capacities for the benefit of others. He mixes the water in the flour and prepares the dough; he separates the chaff from the grain and renders known what is ingestible: he makes intelligible that which is the pleasurable and that which is of the nature of noxious cocktail (without allowing us to spoil our taste: and sometimes he is even able to remove the noxious element and make the cocktail not only potable but refreshingly pleasurable.) His expertise rests in the ability to know proportions and mix or sift accordingly. His accomplishment is as much in the beauty of parallel concepts sufficiently juxtaposed as the clarity with which each thought is expounded. And the ability to be unswayed by personal or geographic leanings, by emotive or ethnic appeal, or by the misplaced esteem of an authority. To be as ungrudging in the exposition of strong points of linkage as the weaker ones; and to avoid both a benign tolerance and an aggressive or blind fervour. To expound, atleast in some measure, the undercurrent without over or underplaying the overt. And in all circumstances keeping a clear perspective of how far the comparison is data based and when it becomes speculative, as well as when this speculation is justified and when not so; and being enamoured of neither. Such tight-rope walking needs as much the level-headedness of a governor as the supple hands of a sculptor. Herein lies the unending possibilities of discovering unearthed nuggets. It would be a poor exercise, indeed, to prevent oneself the enjoyment that can result from genuine appreciation of a good critical and comparative work. And we really cannot but lament

the fate of the thinker who does not have the ability, or denies himself the opportunity, to carry this out.

III

III. 1 We shall now take up another refrain. In its essentials, it asserts that a genuine philosophical work of any worth can result from the study of others' texts; but, rather than think of comparison or synthesis, one should concern oneself, more appropriately, with the indepth study of any one text. Thus, a true and proper approach would result which is holistic. One would be able to avoid a patchwork or partial study of different ideologies that can otherwise occur in a comparative work. Comparison of parts, without consideration for the whole, results in distortion and inaccuracy.

III. 2 There is no doubt that, in competent hands, an indepth study of any one text can give rise to a scholarly work in its own right. But we see no reason to suppose that for this one should take it for granted that an indepth study of only *one* text is possible, or necessary. One may consider the indepth study of more than one text (as needed for genuinely comparative purposes) practically impossible, and therefore improper. But why should it be impossible in the first place? What may not be possible for one with a particular orientation may be perfectly possible for another with another. There are not a few who have been discouraged, or have discouraged others, from taking up comparative analysis of certain works precisely because of the fear that it may be impossible to carry out in an indepth manner. Their argument is that to do justice to even one major text requires a life-time; where, then, is the question of taking up more than one, or comparing and contrasting, which can only follow after indepth study of both? Whatever is impossible for one self is immediately considered applicable to others.

What is probably meant, thereby, is, if he had to do it (or, better still, if the person, as understood by him, had to do it), this state of affairs would prevail. But then, this judgement may be inaccurate. In fact, disuaders have been proved wrong time and again by the potential and genius of human endeavour which can break most barriers in the field of achievement if it sets its heart upon it. When we call something impossible, and therefore improper, we lay a judgement of impropriety based on an evaluation of possibility. And if our evaluation be proved wrong, our judgement automatically stands to question. The claim may appear ambitious when we say both an indepth study, and later a comparison, is possible for more than one major text at the same time. But ambitious are there precisely because achievement can follow. Realistic appraisal need not necessarily be sceptical.

We may, therefore, agree, for the present, that an indepth study of more than one text is possible and a comparative study so based on them can be an acceptable proposition.

III. 3 Let us now turn to one of the other arguments. This concerns those types of comparative studies which may not be the result of an indepth study. Here, one is less likely to have a holistic approach. Thus, one may be unable to evaluate the particular idea or concept one wishes to discuss or compare in the total perspective in which it is expressed. This can lead to inaccuracy in thinking and articulation.

The argument as to what is important, the whole or the part, has had a long and chequered (some would prefer to call it ignominious) career in the history of philosophical thought. And one can still feel its reverberations in the social sciences, in psychology, psychiatry and other branches of medicine as well.⁵ By itself, there is no doubt that a holistic approach to any

problem gives us the best chance of judging it properly. But we must concern ourselves, as well, with the problem that arises when it is used in every situation, as a dogma or a creed. If one considers that for gaining proper knowledge, everything should always be viewed holistically, we may land ourselves in error beside losing the power to appreciate the worth or beauty of parts. And even a work which lays no pretensions of trying to conduct an indepth study can sometimes yield a brilliant appraisal or comparison of the beauty or powers of its parts. The least we can do is not shut our perceptive apparatus to the possibility of this happening, whatever may be our inclinations as to probabilities.

In an exclusive concern with the holistic approach, there can, further, be the danger of being unable to appreciate smaller merits that may be mixed with larger demerits, or *vice versa*. The crippled walk may make one lose the ability to observe the beauty of the accompanying face. One can even go to the extent of saying that a vicious scar on the forehead should not prevent us from appreciating the beautiful proportion of a finely chiselled nose or delicately formed lips. The holistically inclined can definitely dispute the contention whether a person who is crippled can ever be considered beautiful even if she has a beautiful face because, when one says beautiful one means beautiful as a whole. But should our concern with here also being a cripple prevent us from observing the beauty of her other features, oven in the feace of the fact that she may be a cripple? At times, therefore, the ability to perceive *parts as parts*, and as distinct from the whole, is specially important. And this is the worth that any genuine comparative work, even though lacking an indepth study, can attempt to further. This is also the skill any such researcher must develop if he wishes to prove worthwhile. In fact, the ability to perceive parts as parts

may be central to a good comparative philosophical approach (which also explains why such an approach may be anathema, conceptually, to the holistically inclined).

III. 4 We shall carry this discussion a little further. Many a times, extreme importance to the whole can lead to a total or partial neglect of the subtleties and nuances of the parts and the unique features of their inter-relationships. We are free to consider this irrelevant if we wish; but we will not gain a proper perspective of the issue if we do so. Now, we may say here that we have listed above what may be described as improper holistic, the danger of applying it in every situation or, citing of exceptions to disprove a rule. We can very well say that a properly oriented holistic approach, to once again go back to our old example, should make us say, 'Here goes a cripple. But see how beautiful is her face'. Or, 'Here is a person with a beautiful face; but look, alas, she is also a cripple!' In a similar vein, there can be an improper emphasis on parts, for example, when we say, 'So what! she has beautiful features: can you not see she is basically a cripple?' Or, 'So what if she is a cripple. I can only see her face and that is beautiful.'

We would much wish the remark, 'Here goes a cripple with beautiful features', accurate as far as the meaning goes, not make us derogate the beauty of the features because of the crippled walk. This need not, but very well can, happen. And we would also wish appreciation of the beauty of particular features not limit the ability to perceive the crippled nature of the walk. Thus, in our approach, we have to guard against improper holistic as well as improper partial approaches.

III. 5 Having said this, however, we must qualify that at certain times, our focus of attention and genuine ability to appreciate may be based on our ability to de-link the part from

the whole and perceive it as such. The joy of contemplating the beauty of a face need not be marred by the despair of sympathising with the crippled walk. It may not be factually incorrect if we do so, but we wonder if it would be proper because we limit, thereby, our ability to appreciate the subtleties and nuances of the part as a part. And it would be specially improper where the ability to appreciate the beauty of a face has to be carried out in comparison with other beautiful faces. In such a situation, not only is it irrelevant to consider that such-and-such a beautiful face belongs to a cripple, it is improper and likely to bias judgement. One may find it difficult to avoid getting positively or negatively inclined toward the individual as a cripple and this would warp one's judgement about her as a beauty. In any comparative situation, therefore, the ability to appreciate the part as a part, to de-link it from other parts, as well as the whole, may not only be advisable : it may be positively essential. And our example from aesthetics need not be irrelevant to epistemology, or for that matter any other branch of philosophy. A judicious sense of proportion and beauty of juxtaposition are highly relevant to any proper comparative or synthesis-oriented situation in any branch of thought, philosophical or otherwise.

IV

IV. 1 Both creative and comparative works can be mediocre as they can be good. There is no reason to accept a mediocre so-called creative work as anything better than a good comparative one just as there is no need to consider a good creative work more important than a good comparative one or *vice-versa*. Both approaches have their frames of reference and their goals. Within their framework, they are equally important and relevant. Each approach, further, has its worth and its limitations. And none need be considered wholly proper or improper. They have their points of relevance, as their points of irrelevance. Our task

needs to be to differentiate between them and to understand these points of relevance and irrelevance. Anything in the nature of which approach is superior and which inferior is not only an essay in futility, it results in mud-slinging and banter, and reeks of chauvinism, to say the least. In its more extreme forms, it results in intellectual racism and apartheid. Advocation of the creative or the 'one-text indepth study' approach rather than the 'comparative' or 'synthesis oriented one' (or *vice-versa*) may be all right at the personal level, if it suits the individual thinker's style or allows him a proper articulation. But that need not prevent him from realising that there can be other, and equally worthwhile, approaches to a genuine understanding. Any attempt to project one approach to the exclusion of the other leads to regimentation of thought which is contrary to proper philosophizing, and creativity itself.

IV. 2 Further, there is as much scope for the comparative and synthesis oriented approach in creative work as the need for the creative in a comparison or synthesis oriented one. Comparative philosophy can, as well, be creative. And creative philosophy has nothing to lose by being comparative.

And this is no cliché.⁶

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NOTES

1. Rajendra Prasad; "Svaraj, Reverence and Creativity" *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. XI, No. 4, Oct. 1984, p. 509. Emphasis and parenthesis added.
2. Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 503 : "To ignore the work of contemporaries, to complain of their uncreativity without discussing their views, is a delightful pastime of modern Indians, particularly philosophers."
3. "Only rarely do we in India ever take other's work any more seriously than passing amusement..." Dharmendra Goel, "K. C. Bhattacharya's Svaraj in Ideas : Some Reflection", *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. XI, No. 4, Oct. 1984, p. 423.
4. Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 509, Parenthesis added.
5. Note how the Structuralism of Wilhelm Wundt was attacked by the holistic approach of Max Wertheimer and Wolfgang Kohler's Gestalt Psychology and still finds its echoes in the Gestalt Approach of Frederick Perls and his followers, the approaches of Andras Angyal (Holistic-dynamic), Abraham Maslow (Expanded Psychology) and Gardner Murphy (Eclecticism with a difference). How also the partially oriented approaches of John Dewey and James Angell (Functionalism) and John Watson and other's (Behaviourism) attack both Structuralism and the Gestalt Approaches. And each one of them is, atleast partially, on the right track.

Note also how in Psychiatry, the Psychobiologic approach of Meyer and Bio-psycho-social model of Engel - both proponents of holistic approaches - find themselves at logger heads with the biological, the behaviourist and the psychodynamic schools - all of which, though partially oriented, have a lot of worth. In fact, it is the latter schools which, at the present time, not only have greater number of followers and proponents but have led to significant contribution in understanding abnormal human behaviour. While the first part is more a comment on their popularity rather than basic worth, the latter part can hardly be dismissed as of no consequence.

6. Paper presented to the 16th Annual Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress held at Jadavpur University, Calcutta-700 032 in Oct. 1986.