

Synopsis

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Title: The Reality of Dream and Dreamt Objects : An Analysis from the Indian philosophical and Contemporary Physiological Perspectives

Here, I am introducing the contents of my thesis.

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Chapter 1

Here, I am discussing the nature of *jīva* and what the relation between *jivātmā* and *paramātmā* is. Following Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Advaita Vedānta philosophy, I would discuss the stages of life like *Jāgratāvasthā*, *Svapnāvasthā*, *Suṣuptivasthā* and *Turiyāvasthā*.

Chapter 2

In the second chapter, I will discuss the nature of reality, nature of illusion and hallucination following mainly two schools of classical Indian Philosophy.

At first, I would discuss the nature of reality from the perspectives of Nyāya- Vaiśeṣika and Advaita Vedānta philosophy. In this chapter, the main concern is to find out what the reality is. In general, the nature of reality is the most fundamental issue in metaphysics. So, without knowing the classical Indian philosophical views regarding the nature of *reality*, we cannot determine dreaming phenomenon

Two fundamental theories of illusion are *Anirvacaniyakhyātivāda* and *Anyathākhyātivāda* which I would discuss here. In the second section, I would discuss the nature of dream state and argue that dream state is neither illusion nor hallucination.

Chapter 3

In this chapter, I discuss elaborately the nature of dream following Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and two Upaniṣad's (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Māṇḍūkya* with *Gauḍapāda kārīkā*). After that I would discuss the similarity and

dissimilarity between waking and dreaming states. Here the main concern is about the dreaming objects and waking objects.

Chapter 4

I will focus on the nature of imagination in general and the concept as discussed in the two schools, namely, Nyāya- Vaiśeṣika and Advaita Vedānta. The second section is about the mind-body relation, because the philosophical views regarding this relation is crucial in determining the dreaming state.

Chapter 5

In this chapter, I would discuss the nature of dreaming phenomenon from the perspective of Neuroscience and Modern psychology. Here, mainly I would discuss the brain activity and recent developments on this issue. Here mainly I would like to discuss the physiological structures of waking and dreaming states.

Here, I would like to conclude that dream is not an illusory state itself. If we consider it as an illusory state then several possibilities will be overlooked. Philosophically, I would like to draw some important images on the validity of dream state and physiologically I would mention the physiological structure and differences during dream and waking states.

In this phenomenal world we have come across various types of experiences such as good or bad, perceivable or non- perceivable, beautiful or ugly, agreeable or non-agreeable, something near or something far and various colourful dreams etc. Now my research methodological question is **‘can we actually differentiate between dreaming state and waking state?’** When we are in the dreaming world, then no one thinks that she is in a dreaming state; and also I would like to mention that this is not an illusion because our internal functions are going on in the same manner like waking state. Dream and illusion both are not same. So, it is a very old but very crucial issue. There are so many philosophers who had raised the question regarding the status of dream but I want to explain and philosophically discuss it in a different manner by following Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system and Advaita Vedānta system. They are theist schools of classical Indian philosophy. These systems accept the authority of *Veda*. But later I would discuss this notion from the perspective of physiological structure. My research is mainly conceptual research and the design is qualitative design.

According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school, there are two different states such as dreaming state (*Svapnābasthā*) and waking state (*jāgratābasthā*). They said that the dream-cognition is totally non-existential. In the dream state, all stuffs come from waking state. But sometimes we have seen various types of abstract entities in dreaming state due to association of memory and so all dreaming stuffs are unreal.

Naiyāyikas have accepted many reasons for dreaming (mainly three- 1. due to *saṅskāra*, 2. due to *dharmādharmā* and 3. due to imbalance of the body). In the dreaming state, when we perceive, we obtain cognitions like ‘I am seeing *ghataḥ*’, ‘I am seeing *pataḥ*’. In that particular situation there is no doubt regarding these cognitions. So, both waking and dream level cognitions give us the same feelings with same intensity. So my question is how come in spite of the same feeling in both waking and dream state, the objects of dream are characterised as unreal? When we are belonging in dreaming state our cognitions seem real. According to *Nyāyadarśana*, the Naiyāyikas refuted the validity of dream by introducing the *sat* and *asat* distinction. They advocate that all cognition of dream is depending on our previous cognition (*purvānubhav*) and the dream is *asat* (non-existent). Now my point is that they accepted dream as unreal in comparison with waking entity. But why do we compare? and why cannot we accept the separate entity of dream? Naiyāyikas accepted that all dream entities are inherently unreal, but actually they are not. Naiyāyikas advocate that some dreams are not depending on previous cognition. In *Aiteriṇya Āranyak*, 3rd *Āranyak*, 4th chapter and 2nd section, the *śruti vākya* is “*“atha svpnāḥ puruṣāṁ kṛṣṇaṁ kṛṣṇadantaṁ paśyati, sa enaṁ hanti, varāha enaṁ hanti”*” (means he sees a black man with black teeth and that man kills him, a monkey jumps on him). Here the advocates of this *śruti vākya* stated the problem but did not say the actual cause. In *śāstra* many examples are there. Hence, the same problem is found to occur. Again according to Vaiśeṣikas in the book of *Praśastapādabhāṣya*, some dreams are good and beneficial, such as ‘someone gives an umbrella’ and the dream of ‘someone sits on the elephant’ and some dreams are non-beneficial, such as ‘someone is seeing ass’ and ‘someone sits on the camel’ etc. At first, they had established that the objects of dreams are fictitious but finally they said that the objects of dreams are not fictitious against the arguments of Purvapakṣa in 34 no. *sutra* of the 5th section in *Nyāyadarśana*. So my question is ‘if waking state is real and dream state is unreal then why do we consider these two as similar?’

On the other hand, I would like to discuss the relevance of the existence of dream in the light of Advaita Vedānta philosophy. In establishing dream existence, Advaitin's position is very crucial and relevant. We need to know first that we are awake or not.

The object of dream for the time of dreaming is quite real. An objection can be raised which state is 'real'? or are both waking and dream states 'real' at the same time? Here 'real' means existentially present. When we apply this criterion ('criterion' means by which we determine the something) of real on waking life, it seems that it will give consistent answer regardless of our perception.

We already have seen that Nyāya system refuted the existence of dream by *sat*, *asat* distinction. But, when we concentrate on the philosophy of Gauḍapāda, then we will see that he does not preclude the existence of dream by *sat* and *asat* or existent and non-existent distinction. When Gauḍapāda explains something as *asat*, this should not be interpreted as *alīka*. Gauḍapāda says that dream is imagination (*kalpanā*), but this 'imagination' is also applicable in waking state because intensity of imagination is same. Imagination is necessary for the manifestation of subject and object. The manifestation that occurs in waking state can be compared to a dream. He argues that the 'perceiving', 'manifestation' are depending on the 'pulsation of the mind' in both the states. Finally, the pulsation of the mind gets stopped, then there is no origination and manifestation (subject and object). So, from the perspective of manifestation and origination, dream state is real.

According to Advaitins, the knowledge of dream is caused due to *smṛiti* (memory). Some opponents had raised questions as to what is the importance of the criterion of determining illusory objects, because the objects of dream are real only in *prātibhāsika* level. Then Śaṅkarācārya replied that objects of dream were neither 'sat' nor 'asat'. 'Sat' means existentially real and 'asat' means 'sky-flower' etc.

Now, I would like to discuss the notion of *dṛstisṛṣṭivāda*. Advaitin scholar Madhusūdana Sarasvati advocates the four different models of Advaita which are

A) *Ābhāsavāda* (self is bounded by bondage and bondage is the *ābhāsa* of pure consciousness, liberation is free from all bondage).

B) *Pratibimbavāda* (According to *Prakāśatman*, *Īśvara* is the consciousness {*vimvacaitanya*} conditioned {*upahita*} by ignorance).

C) *Avacchedavāda* (Īśvara has been objectified by ignorance).

D) *Dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda* (some phenomena are not objectively existent but only subjectively imagined).

Every imagination is determined by subjective *avidyā* respective to the individual. This *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda* theory comes near to the *Vijñānavāda* Buddhism because they also do not admit any objective fact independent of consciousness. All imaginations are depending on our physical and mental phenomena and all phenomena are modified by ignorance. Here, I would like to add that this ignorance is present in both waking and dream states.

We know that consciousness is present in both states but the question is how to understand this consciousness? All Advaitins posit that consciousness is self-realisation and existence and consciousness are reciprocal. *Dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda* holds that the immediate function of consciousness is self-revelation.

According to *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda*, the entity of dream is not contradicted by entity of waking state but they are different from trifle entity (*tuccha*). Even the empirical world bears some degree of truth. Now my question remains as to when we are in dreaming state then we see ‘we are seeing or doing’, ‘moving to here and there’, how is it possible? Since here we have seen that both these states (dreaming and waking) give us the same kind of cognition, how come we differentiate these states? *Vaidāntikās* tried to resolve the problem through *Arthakriyā* (i.e someone is taking the pot and then keep it another side). But when we are in dreaming state then also we come across the action (*arthakriyā*). *Vyāvahāra* is of four kinds, *arthakriyā* is one of these. Hence, the problem remains and the same question occurs, how can we differentiate the waking state from the dream?

Now I would discuss the dreaming phenomenon from the perspective of Advaita Vedānta. In *Brahmasūtra*, Śaṅkarācārya interprets the dreaming phenomena in his bhāṣya. In the second section, the first verse is “*Sandhe Sr̥ṣṭirāha hi*”(3/2/1).

In *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalko and Janaka’s conversation on dream is very relevant here. There is an intervening stage between waking and deep sleep state which is dream. For an apposite person, he has two spaces according to his desires that are *iholoka* (present world) and *paroloka* (future world). Apart from it, the intervening stage is also very crucial stage for everyone. When the person is in the intervening stage, then he is able to see the life of *paroloka*. When the dreamer is seeing the chariot, the road and animals in the

dreaming stage, then there is no existential value because all are merely the works of nescience (*māyā*). But the objection is about the status of dreaming stage because all objects of dream are seeming like real as in the case of waking state.

In Bhāṣya, Śaṅkara adheres that the junction of the two stages is real and that creation is also occurred in this intervening stage which is also real. But the objects of the creation are not real rather they appeared as real entity.

The third verse of *Śaṅkarabhāṣya*, “*Māyāmatram tu kātsanyanibhivyaktasyarupatvāt*” (3/2/3). Here, Śaṅkara says that the intervening stage is mere nescience (*māyā*) because there is no complete manifestation. Now the question is what is complete manifestation? Complete manifestation is always possessed with the notion of time, space and circumstances because these are subtle. In dreaming stage, the scenario has been changed due to the lack of space, time and circumstances. The notion of causality is not adequate in dreaming state. With the limitation of body, the waking structure of chariot and dreaming structure of chariot both are different because of the absence of manifestation. Now the question is about cognition. The cognition of chariot in waking and the cognition of chariot in dreaming are different because according to *Advaita Vedānta*, dreaming cognition is not veridical (*ayathārtha*) and waking cognition is veridical (*yathārtha*).

In *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, Dharmarājadharaṇḍra says the definition (*lakṣṇa*) of dream. The definition is “*Indriyājanya-viṣaya-gocarāparokṣāntaḥkaraṇ-vṛttavyasthā svapnāvasthā*”, means when external organs do not operate and the subject-object (*viṣaya-viṣayaka*) relationship happens due to desire, then the stage of specific direct *vṛtti* is called *svapnāvasthā*. In waking state, when the external organs are present, then there is also *vṛtti* which depends on external organs that is indirect (*parokṣa*). But in dreaming state, external organs do not occur, due to desire the *vṛtti* is created by *avidyā* then dream arises. In waking state, *antaḥkaraṇvṛttavasthā* presents but in dreaming state, due to absence to external organs *antaḥkaraṇvṛttavasthā* does not present, only *avidyāvṛtti* presents. Here ‘*antaḥkaraṇvṛttavasthā*’ meaning the *antaḥkaraṇa* is objectified by desires. So that objectified form is called *avidyāvṛtti*. In this definition, there is no *ativyāpti*, because the definition claims that when dream occurs, then all external avenues are closed. In illusion, the cognition always occurs as “*idam*” (*indriyājanya*) because there is also desire and external organs but in dreaming state, the status of cognition is ‘*indriyājanya*’, not as *indriyājanya*. According to this notion, the statement is dream is not an illusion. Dream is different from illusion.

In *Pañcadaśī*, Sri Vidyāraṇyāmaṇi defines the nature of dream. He discusses this notion in *Yogānandaprakāraṃ*. There are two verses in *Yogānandaprakāraṃ* on dreaming phenomenon. He asserts "“*itthaṇ jāgarane tattvāvīdo brahmasukhaṃ sadā / bhāti tadvāsanājanyaḥ svapne tadbhāste tathā*””(132), means *pāṇḍita* also realises the *brahmasukhānubhava* in dream state because due to his desire that *sukhānubhava* appears like waking *brahmasukhānubhava*. Here, they did not negate the dreaming realisation of *brahmasukhānubhava*. “*avidyāvāsanāpyastīyatastadvāsanotthite / svapne mūrkhavadevaiṣa sukhaṇ duḥkhaṇ ca vīkṣate*”(134) means *svapna* always occurs due to *avidyāvṛtti*, not only *ānandavāsana*. That is why *pāṇḍita* also feels *sukha* and *duḥkhaḥ* in dreaming state like a lay man.

Neurological standpoint

- Dream is a peculiar form of declarative memory and there is no generally accepted definition of dreaming. Rather it may be defined as the subjective experience of a complex hallucinatory episode during sleep.
- There are two hypothesised positions regarding dream, 1) the encoding of dream contents during sleep and sleep shares some electrophysiological mechanisms with the encoding of episodic memories of awaking brain.
- 2) recalling a dream after awakening from non-rapid eye movement(NREM) and rapid eye movement(REM). Both are associated with different oscillations.
- There is no substantial differences in the sleep architecture of the subjects grouped as a function of sleep stage at awakening (REM/stage1) and dream recall. REM stage is the physiological concomitant of the subjective experience of dreaming.
- It is posited that dreaming and REM are incompletely correlated hitherto. 5-30% of REM awakening do not elicit dream reports.
- Dream, hallucinations, delusion, disorientation, accentuated affect and amnesia are all attributed to the arrest of brain stem aminergic modulation of brain stem. Dreams are actively generated by brain stem and passively synthesized by forebrain. Forebrain is the passive participant in the REM state.

Conclusion

Scholars know that for being *pramānavādi*, Nyāya did not explain directly the dreaming notion. Rather they presented their view on dream with the conversation with *Vijñānavādins*. They are realists. They held that dreaming notion is formed by memory and memory is a product of external world. Through the intervention of the external world, memory is created by mind. All dreaming objects are unreal because these are all *asat* (non-existent). They don't have the existential value. On the other hand, the colossal Vaidāntika scholar Gauḍapāda held that real is one and only Brahmana, apart from it all are unreal that is why dreaming and waking phenomena both are unreal. Unreal means they do not exist and *anirvacaniya* means we are not able to express it. Nyāya tried to tell that dream is also illusion. Here the main objection is that dream is not an illusion because illusion is a complex psychosis. Now, what is complex psychosis? It means when that psychosis occurs, then you have to accept that there are two objects, one internal and other is external. Otherwise you could not say it is complex. When someone saying "it is silver" instead of nacre, then nacre is external object and silver is internal object. Due to some reason the perceiver cannot identify the real one. Here mind is dependent on external object. That is why it is complex but in the dream all stuffs are internal according to Naiyāyikas. Hence, they cannot say that dream is an illusion. In this connection if someone says that dream is a hallucination, then it is also proved that dream is not a hallucination.

Hallucination is completely different from dream because in hallucination perceiver assumes that 'something is there or happening' and here mind is independently working and the object does not exist at all. Most important part is that the physiological construction is different. But in the dreaming stage, when perceiver is saying "this is a pot", "I love you" and "I hate you", the physiological construction is same like waking state according to Neuroscientists and the status of cognition also is same otherwise people are not able to say "this is a man" in the dreaming state. So, in dream, people know the nature of the object as it is. It does not mean cow instead of a man. Yes!! Sometimes the dreaming structure is a camouflage. Actually, this is a message of mind in a different way. So, it is determined that dreaming phenomenon exists and cognition is

possible. The last issue is status of the object of dream. For the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, if reality means the object has to be present in front of the perceiver, then in dreaming state we can say that object presents in front of the perceiver otherwise we are not able to say “this is a pot” in dreaming state, and it has physiological explanation from the perspective of Neuroscience and Modern psychology. The notion of reality does not depend on the states of affair, rather it depends on the understanding of the object. It means when people are saying “this is a pot”, then this notion explains that “we know what the pot is”. Most important part is in waking state, people are seeing a chair in one form and in dreaming state by imagination people are seeing a chair in a different form and colour but the perceiver will say “this is also chair” due to *sāmānyalakṣaṇa pratyakṣa*. Without knowing the genus of object people are not able to say “this is a chair”, and when people are seeing a chair, then the physiological structure is same. According to this notion if people will explain the notion of reality through understanding then it is possible to say dream is real.

- According to neurological standpoint, dreaming is not an intrinsic function of REM sleep. Rather, dreaming appears to be a consequence of various forms of cerebral activation during sleep.
 - Dreaming notion reflects by the recombination of memories and the associations of some ways of mind. But which memory systems are activated during dreaming remains UNCERTAIN.
 - Dreaming faculty addresses always two questions: a) how different forms of dream are regarded as bizarre and unrecognizable representation of memories? Is there any chronology or not?
 - How these elements are combined with others?
 - Why the dream construction process is behaviourally, physiologically and psychologically useful in our cognitive domain if it is unreal?

Therefore, I think that all dreaming images are phenomenally real and meaningful too. Due to lack of understanding we do not realise the camouflage and bizarre forms of dream. If we *consider the Advaita model* of reality, then all possibilities of dreaming truth will be determined as justified phenomena and dream is not regarded only as an illusory state.

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