

NANDITA BANDYOPADHYAY

THE CONCEPT OF CONTRADICTION IN INDIAN
LOGIC AND EPISTEMOLOGY

I

The concept of contradiction in Indian philosophy raises some interesting logical and epistemological problems, which, though not left unnoticed by Indian philosophers, have not received adequate emphasis from modern interpreters. The English term 'contradiction', in the wider sense of incompatibility, finds its approximate Sanskrit equivalent in *virodha*.¹ The term *virodha*, however, as it is understood by Udayana in the *Nyāyakusumāñjali*, carries the sense of absolute opposition, which involves the operation of the Law of Excluded Middle. This sense of *virodha* is brought out by Udayana in the following well-known verse:

parasparavirodhe hi na prakārantarasthitiḥ /
naikatāpi viruddhānām uktimātravirodhataḥ //
(Nk 3/8)

[In the case of mutual contradiction there is no third alternative. There is also no identity of the contradictories, for the contradiction is apparent on the very face of assertions.]

The two contradictories 'A is B' and 'A is not-B' present such a contradiction. Without factually ascertaining which one is true and which false we can at once logically intuit that one is true and the other false and that both cannot be true or both false, because B and not-B together exhaust the whole universe of discourse leaving no third alternative.² To sense this contradiction we need not even go for the concrete value of B. The same thing is apparent if we even give a value of B, say 'cow', wherewith we get the two propositions, 'A is cow' and 'A is not-cow'. There is no doubt that the question of truth or falsity ultimately bears a factual reference. Yet our immediate frame of reference does not necessarily include any ascertainment as to which one of the propositions corresponds to fact and which does not.

It is in this sense that we can call it a logical contradiction. Such a contradiction obtains between two such propositions in which an affirmative predicate and its direct negation are predicated of the same subject. Here the two contradictory predicates are in essence identical with their mutual negation (*parasparābhāvarūpatva* — Vardhamāna's Prakāśa on Nk 3/8). Cow is the same as the negation of not-cow and not-cow as the negation of cow. In this way the two predicates are mutually repelling so that cancellation of the affirmative amounts to the assertion of its negative and cancellation of the negative to the assertion of the affirmative; and so there is no possibility of any third alternative:

bhāvābhāvayoḥ parasparapratikṣepatvalakṣaṇasvarūpatvād bhavaniṣedho'bhāvavidhiḥ
 syāt, tanniṣedhasca bhāvavidhiḥ, tena tābhyām anyaḥ prakāraḥ sambhavati na kasyāpi
 Varadarāja's Bodhanī on Nk 3/8

Now let us take a pair of opposites without the operation of Excluded Middle, e.g. 'A is a cow' and 'A is a horse'. It is true that here the factual reference is not so much suppressed as in the previous case, for we know from fact that 'cow' and 'horse' cannot be predicated of the same subject. If we say 'A is B' and 'A is C', without providing the values of B and C, it is not at all possible to sense any *virodha*, since B may stand for 'intelligent' and C for 'diligent' without giving any scope for opposition. It is only when B and C stand for cow and horse or any such pair of mutually exclusive predicates that we can immediately sense the opposition. This is not, however, a case with the propositions 'A is B' and 'A is not-B' wherein we need not wait for substituting concrete factual values in order to intuit the logical contradiction. From this standpoint we may say that the two contrary propositions 'A is a cow' and 'A is a horse' provide a case for 'factual opposition'. It is factual in the sense that if one is a fact, the other is not, but not in the sense that both are *facts* such that one *fact factually* eliminates the other. For a purely factual opposition we shall turn to Dharmakīrti later on.

Yet there is an important consideration which transfers this opposition between the two contraries from the realm of facts to the realm of logic. The moment we are presented with such a pair of propositions, even without probing into the concrete factual position as to

which one is true or which false, we may at once grasp the logical position that one may be true and the other false, or both may be false, leaving unimpaired the possibility of a third alternative, say, 'A is a camel'; but we know at the same time that both cannot be true. In this sense this sort of *virodha*, unattended by the Law of Excluded Middle, may also be legitimately called a logical opposition.

The first type of *virodha* is technically called *parasparavirahavyāpakatva* (pervasion of mutual negation by two predicates). This means that the two predicates, *B* and not-*B*, are so related that we can deduce the following from their relation: — Whatever is a negation of not-*B* is *B* and whatever is a negation of *B* is not-*B*. It brings out both mutual exclusion and Excluded Middle.

The second type of *virodha* is technically called *parasparavirahavyāpyatva* (pervasibility of the predicates by their mutual negation). Here we get mutual exclusion without Excluded Middle. In the pair of opposites 'A is a cow' and 'A is a horse', the two predicates are so related that we can say: — Whatever is a cow is a negation of 'horse' and whatever is a horse is a negation of 'cow'. We are not entitled to turn this into the converse order such that whatever is a negation of 'horse' is a cow and whatever is a negation of 'cow' is a horse, for there being no Excluded Middle, *A* may be neither a cow, nor a horse, but a camel. In the first type of *virodha*, however, the converse order is equally tenable, for we may legitimately say: — Whatever is *B* is negation of not-*B* and whatever is not-*B* is negation of *B*. Thus it is a case of *samavyāpti* (converse pervasion) having both *parasparavirahavyāpakatā* and *parasparavirahavyāpyatā*. On the contrary, the second type of *virodha* is a case of *viśamavyāpti* (non-converse pervasion), for it has only *parasparavirahavyāpyatā*, and not *parasparavirahavyāpakatā*. The first type is also a case of *parasparaviraharūpatā*. *Parasparavirahavyāpakatā* and *parasparaviraharūpatā* are but two aspects of the same contradiction.

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, in his defence of the Advaita position subscribing to an indefinable relative existence (*anirvacanīyasattā*) of the material universe, proposes that absolute existence and absolute non-existence are not caught in such an absolute contradiction as to negate an intermediate position of relative existence. In the conventional Advaita view *virodha* between existence and non-existence is of

the type of *parasparavirahavyāpyatva* which excludes the Law of Excluded Middle, as for example, in the case of cowness and horse-ness the negation of both of which is found in a third alternative, camel —

nāpi vyāghātaḥ
gotvāśvatvayoḥ parasparavirahavyāpyatve'pi
tadabhāvayoruṣṭrādāvekatra sahopalambhāt,

(As pp. 51—55)

Obviously, here Madhusūdana restricts the term *vyāghāta* to absolute contradiction which brooks no middle alternative.

Thus, of existence and non-existence, both cannot be affirmed, but both can be denied, if the relation between the two is conceived as one of *parasparavirahavyāpyatā*. Hence a third alternative as an indefinable something is not prevented by such a *virodha*. Such is the phenomenal world:

sattvāsattvayoḥ parasparavirahavyāpyatve'pi
tadabhāvayorekatra prapañce sambhavān na vyāhatih

— Siddhi Comm. on *ibid.* p. 52.

Sometimes the term *vyāghāta* is used to mean paradoxical self-contradiction. Udayana uses this term in order to show the impossibility of universal doubt about causality. Universal doubt is contradicted by doubt itself. It is not possible to doubt that there is no causality at all, for in that case no reason could be assigned to the doubt. One must advance arguments to prove that causality is a doubtful category and doubt must be based on these arguments. The universal proposition of a thorough-going agnostic is as follows:

All statements of causality are doubtful.

Now this universal statement is itself a statement of causality, being the pronounced effect of the arguments advanced by the agnostic. Hence as a consequence to the very logic of agnosticism the statement of universal doubt should itself be subject to doubt. If the agnostic denies this logical consequence he has to admit that the law of causation operates at least in relation to universal doubt, thus negating universal doubt itself. If the agnostic accepts this logical consequence

the result is the same. If it is averred that universal doubt has no arguments to fall back upon and as such it is an uncaused phenomenon, the agnostic would turn out to be an incorrigible eccentric unfit for any communication. When somebody says, "All will turn out to be false", the question pertinently crops up — whether this very statement is comprehended under 'All' or not. In the former case the statement about universal falsity will itself prove to be false. In the latter case the statement itself becomes a point of violation of universal falsity. This is called *svakriyāvvyāghāta* by Udayana:³

śāṅkāyā vyāghātāvadhivāt tadeva hyāśaṅkyeta yasminnāśaṅ-
kyamāne svakriyāvvyāghātādayo doṣā nāvatarantīti lokamaryādā /
na hi hetuphalabhāvo na bhaviṣyatīti śāṅkitumapi śakyate,
tathā sati śāṅkaiva na syāt, sarvaṁ mithyā bhaviṣyatītyādivat

Nk under III/7 pp. 345—347.

II

Both these types of *virodha*, namely, *parasparavirahavyāpakatā* and *parasparavirahavyāpyatā* are compressed by Dharmakīrti into a single type called *parasparaparihārasthitalakṣaṇatā* which literally means 'having the property of standing in mutual exclusion' (Nb. pp. 203—207). Dharmakīrti himself illustrates this type of *virodha* as one between *bhāva* and *abhāva* (affirmation and negation). Dharmottara, also includes within this category the type of opposition without Excluded Middle such as obtaining between blue and yellow. Between affirmation and negation which exclude any intermediary the contradiction is sensed immediately and directly. But the opposition between blue and yellow which permits an intermediary springs from mutual difference, i.e., blue is different from yellow and yellow from blue. There is no doubt that there is mutual difference also in the case of blue and not-blue. But the logical intuition of this contradiction does not depend on the notion of mutual difference between blue and not-blue, for here directly we get the negation of blue. In the case of mutual exclusion without Excluded Middle Dharmottara virtually states *parasparavirahavyāpyatā* in a different language, when he observes that opposition between blue and yellow is invariably related to their mutual difference, i.e. blue is not-yellow and yellow is not-

blue. Thus Dharmottara very finely brings out the difference of a *virodha* between an affirmation and a negation from a *virodha* between two affirmations. The former he calls *bhāvābhāvayorvirodhaḥ* and the latter *vastunorvirodhaḥ*

tathā ca bhāvābhāvayoḥ sākṣād virodhaḥ, vastunostu anyonyābhāvāvvyabhicāritvād virodhaḥ — *ibid.* p. 204.

What is logically more significant in this context is Dharmottara's observation that the *virodha* based on mutual exclusion (including both the varieties) is the contradiction of identity (*ekātmatvavirodha*), which underlies the relation between the law of identity and the law of contradiction. An object is identical with itself and not with what is not itself. It is the essential or logical opposition (*lākṣaṇikavirodha*) as distinguished from factual opposition. Between 'A is blue' and 'A is not-blue' one must be true and the other false. But the false proposition does not correspond to a false fact, since there is no *false fact* in the world. If A is truly blue, the false proposition 'A is not-blue' has no direct fact to fall upon, for the fact is absorbed by the true proposition. Thus a false proposition, given its falsity, can imply its negation which is true, but cannot *correspond* to its negation. So the contradiction between a false proposition and a true proposition does not stand upon a contradiction between two corresponding facts, but between a fact and a non-fact or an intellectually imposed imagined fact. So the contradiction is logical, but not factual. In a certain sense, however, non-factuality is more pronounced in opposition between blue and yellow, when both are false. In this case the *virodha*, if any, obtains between two non-facts. But it is doubtful whether we should call it a *virodha* at all, because when both are false one does not negate the other, but both are negated by a middle alternative, e.g., 'A is white'. Between blue and yellow the *virodha* then obtains only in the sense that both cannot be true. Obviously Dharmottara does not take into consideration the aspect of non-excluded middle which provides that both may be false. Hence there is sufficient force in Madhusūdana's argument that the non-excluded middle makes *para-sparavirahavyāpyatā* non-determinant of *vyāghātā* or absolute contradiction — (*tasya vyāghātāprajakatvāt* — As. p. 52).

Purely factual (rather physical) contradiction is considered first

by Dharmakīrti in his classification of *virodha*. We get this *virodha* when one fact is replaced by an opposed fact, e.g., cold-sensation is eliminated by hot sensation, or darkness by light. Dharmakīrti's definition of physical contradiction runs as follows:

avikalakāraṇasya bhavato'nyabhāve'bhāvād virodhagatiḥ

Nb. p. 198.

[When an existing fact having unimpaired causal conditions ceases to exist with the emergence of another fact, there is cognition of 'contradiction'⁴]

It is purely factual contradiction, for here we really get two facts one replacing the other, at the same place. For example, a chain of cold sense-data is replaced or eliminated by a chain of hot sense-data. A preceding chain of similar events is broken by a succeeding dissimilar chain of similar events. The breach is caused by a breach in the causal factors of the preceding chain of events. But we remember that Dharmottara has used the expression '*vastunorvirodhaḥ*' in the case of opposition between blue and yellow. By this loose expression of Dharmottara one should not be misled into thinking that the *virodha* between blue and yellow is also a *factual* one. Dharmottara has used that expression in order to bring out the difference between the *virodha* between blue and not-blue and the *virodha* between blue and yellow. When *A* is blue in fact '*A* is yellow' is not a fact at all. So one is true and the other false. Hence there is no opposition between two facts. (We ignore the case where both may be false). Here it is a question of logical truth value. But the contradiction between cold *sensa* and hot *sensa*, as defined by Dharmakīrti, is a contradiction between two dissimilar series of really happening events, such that one series is eliminated by another succeeding series. Since both the series are composed of really happening events, this is a purely factual contradiction having no logical problem of truth value. It is turned into a logical contradiction when we get two propositions '*A* is hot' and '*A* is cold' with reference to the same time and place.

Now factual contradiction is called *sahānavasthāna* or the contradiction of conterminousness (i.e. conterminousness of opposed phenomena is contradicted) in contradistinction to *ekātmatvavirodha* or the contradiction of identity (i.e. identity of opposed terms is con-

tradicted). In deference to the Buddhist theory of momentariness Dharmottara has got to introduce many fine sophistications into his painstaking interpretation of physical contradiction. We have no time or space to go into those details. Only one thing is to be noted in this context. Contradiction of mutual exclusion is all-comprehensive. It is so because, apart from the question of factual elimination, we may logically say that hot is not-cold and cold is not-hot, or light is not-darkness and darkness is not-light. This logical *virodha* is present wherever identity is denied. Factual contradiction, however, is limited to a few instances:

tato bhinnavyāpārau virodhau / ekena virodhena śiṭoṣṇasparśayorekatvaṁ vāryate,
anyena sahāvasthānam . . . sakale vastunyavastuni ca parasparaparihāravirodhaḥ /
vastunyeva katipaye sahānavasthānavirodhaḥ /

Dharmottara's Comm. on Nb. p. 207.

III

Gadādhara seems to throw a new light from a new angle on the distinction between factual opposition and logical opposition. In his commentary on Gaṅgeśa's Savyabhicāraprakaraṇa Raghunātha uses the term '*svarūpato virodhaḥ*' to mean logical contradiction. Literally '*svarūpato virodhaḥ*' means essential contradiction. Gadādhara defines '*svarūpato virodhaḥ*' as —

parasparābhāvavyāpyatvāviśeṣitayoḥ parasparajñānapratibandhakibhūta-
jñānaviṣayatvam

Gādādhari on Sp. pp. 149—150.

[Essential contradiction is being the object-content of such a knowledge as is related to another knowledge in a relation of mutual preventiveness, in such a way that the two contradictory objects are not (necessarily) qualified by (the knowledge of) their being pervaded by mutual negation.]

The purport of this definition may be understood by contrasting the *virodha* between fire and water with the *virodha* between fire and not-fire. Fire and water are caught in factual opposition in the sense that they cannot belong to the same locus (*sahānavasthāna* or *ekādhi-karaṇāvṛttitva* which is the same as *parasparābhāvavyāpyatva*, i.e. pervasion by mutual negation). But this factual opposition does not

rise to the level of mutual cognitive preventiveness until and unless one knows that they are pervaded by mutual negation. This is evident from Gadādhara's own explanation:

tasya vāstavaviruddhaviśayakasyāpi jñānasya virodhāviśayakasyāpratibandhakatvāt
ibid. p. 149.

It is not *logically* necessary that one who knows fire and water also knows that these do not co-exist in the same locus. So the knowledge of fire does not necessarily prevent the knowledge of water in the same locus and vice versa. But mutual prevention necessarily emerges only when fire and water are known as being pervaded by their mutual negation. In this sense there is no logical or essential contradiction between fire and water or between the knowledge of fire and the knowledge of water.

But the contradiction between fire and not-fire presents a different case. Here the contradiction floats on the very face of the terms so much so that it at once passes into our logical intuition. This is underlined in Udayana's expression — '*uktimātravirodhataḥ*'. The knowledge of fire at once prevents the knowledge of not-fire. There is no doubt about the absence of not-fire in the same locus with fire. Grasping of contradiction between fire and not-fire and their mutual cognitive prevention does not depend on any such necessary qualificatory knowledge that fire and not-fire are pervaded by their mutual negation, though this pervasion by mutual negation undoubtedly prevails in fact.⁵

In our English translation of Gadādhara's definition of *svarūpato virodhaḥ* we have deliberately inserted the word 'necessarily' (in brackets) as an adverb to the word 'qualified' (*aviśeṣita* = not-qualified). Otherwise the expression may be misleading, for one may be misled to think that logical contradiction in the sense of reciprocal cognitive prevention must not be accompanied by the knowledge of pervasion by mutual negation. It is certainly not the case. What Gadādhara wanted to suggest is that the knowledge of pervasion by reciprocal negation is not a necessary condition for ascertaining the contradiction between fire and not-fire and their mutual cognitive preventiveness though such a pervasion is definitely there. In this respect essential or logical *virodha* differs from factual *virodha* (e.g.

between fire and water) which cannot be grasped without being attended by the knowledge of pervasion by mutual negation.

By factual contradiction we mean contradiction both on the physical and mental plane. We have dealt with a type of physical contradiction with reference to Dharmakīrti who shows that a series of cold sense-data is physically replaced by a series of hot sense-data. This is a case of physical elimination. It is quite possible that physical elimination goes along with physical prevention. A fire is put out by a jet of water. Here water not only eliminates the existing fire, but also prevents the emergence of a new fire as long as the combustible materials are kept sufficiently wet by water. The same aspects of elimination and prevention occur on the mental plane also. A man takes fright by taking a wind-tossed piece of rope for a wriggling snake in darkness. The corrective judgment, 'It is a rope' not only eliminates the wrong judgment, but also prevents the re-emergence of the wrong judgment as long as the corrective judgment is there in respect of the same object at the same place.⁶

Contradiction in the sense of elimination (*nivartana*) or prevention (*pratirodha* or *pratibandha*) should be better called *bādha*. *Bādha* means an obstruction which prevents or eliminates something on the basis of opposition. In this sense there may be *virodha* without *bādha*, but no *bādha* without *virodha*. We may be presented with two propositions, 'A is a snake' and 'A is a rope', or 'A is a snake' and 'A is not-snake', without knowing what the fact is. Nevertheless, we sense the contradiction all right. This contradiction is transformed into *bādha* only when we know the fact. If the object is rope or not a snake, and we come to know it as such, this correct knowledge eliminates or prevents (*bādhate*) the erroneous knowledge, 'A is a snake'. This elimination is undoubtedly based on a basic opposition between the eliminator and the eliminated. This may be accepted as a matter of commonsense logic.

IV

But there is an uncommon outlook upon this whole matter of contradiction which has appeared so simple so long. The extreme Buddhist idealist Prajñākaragupta and the extreme Advaitins like Ānandabodha

and Prakāśānanda question this very concept of *bādha* and *virodha*. Jayarāsibhatta, the most formidable agnostic, is their powerful ally at least in this respect.

According to the conventional Advaita view an object of illusion is not an absolute nothing, but an indefinable something midway between absolute existence and absolute non-existence. Such an appearance is called *anirvacanīyakhyaṭi*. The Naiyāyikas agree that an absolute 'non-existent' cannot have an empirical appearance. Yet an object of illusion need not be conceived as an indefinable 'existent'. It seems more rational to them to accept the position that in the case of a nacre-silver illusion the identity of nacre is suppressed for some reason, and silver, really existing somewhere else, is somehow dragged by memory and tagged to the given object so that nacre appears as silver which is really not there. This is the theory of *anyathākhyāṭi*. The absence of any silver there is confirmed by the subsequent contradictory corrective negative judgment that it is not silver. It is here that Ānandabodha challenges the very concept of contradiction (as a real property of reality itself). 'It is a silver' and 'It is not silver' are two totally different cognitions presenting two different objects. So where is the scope of contradiction?

Ko'yaṁ virodho vitti cedubhayamāvedayataḥ

Nm. p. 90.

That means that there is contradiction in such an impossible cognitive judgment as 'It is silver and not-silver (or nacre)' in which two contradictory predicates are absurdly sought to be predicated of a single subject in a single proposition. Such a proposition is plainly unentertainable. But there is no contradiction in an object projecting two different appearances in two different cognitions, difference between which is caused by difference in causal factors. Moreover, contradiction cuts both ways. So why do you not say that illusory silver contradicts not-silver and accept the existence of silver in the supposedly wrong judgment? The subsequent negative judgment is not necessarily stronger than the preceding one. It is not impossible for a wrong affirmative judgment to follow a right negative judgment. Should we then be permitted to say that affirmation corrects the negation? You may expect this subsequent affirmation to be undone by a further

subsequent emergence of the same negation. But leaving apart the question of infinite regress, how is it possible for a person to decide in a situation where he dies just after making the wrong affirmation without having any chance of entertaining any further negation?

virodhe'pi bhāva eva kinnāśrayaṇīyah? abhāvāvabhāsāvirodhāt, prābalyāt parācaḥ pratyayasyeti cen maivam, bhāvāvabhāsasyāpi parāco darśanāt, astyevāsmādapyavabhāsaḥ parācīna iti cen na, asaṅgātābādhānāmapī nidhanopalambhāt

Nm. p. 91.

Eliminative contradiction may be called epistemic or logico-epistemic contradiction in the sense that wrong knowledge is said to be eliminated by right knowledge. It is logico-epistemic in contrast to the inherent logical contradiction which does not make it possible to entertain any such absurd proposition as 'It is silver and not-silver (or nacre)'. But in logico-epistemic contradiction it is quite possible for the same person to entertain two consecutive propositions such as 'It is silver' and 'It is not silver (or it is nacre)', both relating to the same substantive (*viśesya* or *uddeśya*, i.e. subject). Factual contradiction, where one fact is eliminated by another, is also ultimately an epistemic contradiction, for what is a fact or not is finally decided on the cognitive plane of appearance.

Ānandabodha attacks the problem of cognitive elimination from another angle also. Every knowledge is valiant (*śura*) only in respect of its own object (*śvagocaraśūra*). It has grip only over that which appears in itself and so it has nothing to do with the object of another knowledge.

In that case one knowledge cannot remove the object of another knowledge.⁷ So it is a howler to say that the false object of the false knowledge (and for that the knowledge itself) is liquidated by the right knowledge. The false object is also an object and is very much there. Then how is the object false and the knowledge invalid? Ānandabodha answers — well, that is why the false silver is an indefinable and indeterminable existence outside the range of absolute nothing and absolute something. So falsity means indeterminability or indefinability and false knowledge is that which has for its object such an indefinable 'existent'. But if the false object is not removed why does it not continue even after the right knowledge? Here Ānandabodha replies

like a traditional Advaitist of the Vivaraṇa School: Right knowledge does not directly eliminate false knowledge and its object, but it removes the positive *avidyā* which screens the right object and projects the false one. *Avidyā* is the material cause of the false object. The material cause being removed, its material effect ceases to exist and the knowledge also ceases with the cessation of its object. Thus in the final analysis, *bādha* is not the elimination of wrong knowledge and its object, but their spontaneous cessation through the removal of positive nescience, the material cause:

tasmāt savilāsāvidyānivṛttireva bādha ityācāryāḥ

Nm p. 125 (see also Nm pp. 120—125)

Prakāśānanda, the author of the *Vedāntasiddhāntamuktāvalī*, proposes a slight modification in Ānandabodha's conception of *bādha*. After the false knowledge 'It is silver' we have the right knowledge 'It is nacre'. This right knowledge is called *vidyā* which is affirmative in character. It is *adhikaraṇatattvasākṣātkāra*, i.e. the direct right knowledge of nacre as nacre (which is the substratum of false silver projected upon it). Elimination of *avidyā* begins at this stage by removing its screening power (*āvaraṇasakti*). But the power of projection (*vikṣepasakti*) of false silver is finally removed by the right knowledge in the negative form, 'It is not silver'. Thus *bādha* proper is this negative right knowledge coming after the affirmative right knowledge:

sākṣātkṛte tvadhiṣṭhāne samanantaraniścitiḥ /
adhyasyamānaṁ nāstīti bādha ityucyate budhaiḥ //

— Vsm p. 219, (See also pp. 227—228).

Here also it is to be seen that the correct propositional judgment does not directly negate the wrong one, but it eliminates the positive ignorance which is considered to be the material cause of the false judgment and its object, and thereby paves the way for their spontaneous cessation. It is obvious that this Advaitist treatment of contradiction is heavily coloured by its metaphysical consideration. We need not digress here into all the complications which may be introduced into the Advaita concept of final emancipation by such a concept of contradiction. Of course, neither Ānandabodha nor Prakāśānanda need be

unduly perturbed over this, because according to them nobody has attained liberation as yet. Liberation can only be the simultaneous liberation of all individuals without exception, for all individuals are one and the same. So long as there is an empirical world for a single individual none can be said to have attained emancipation.

Śrīharṣa, the poet-philosopher who is perhaps the most formidable destructive opponent of realism, attacks the problem of contradiction (*virodha*) from a novel standpoint. Contradiction is supposed to bear the sense of incompatibility. Incompatibility means *sahānavasthānaniyama*, i.e., the law of not staying together. Śrīharṣa here examines *bhāvā-bhāvayorvirodhaḥ* or absolute contradiction. The law then means that an affirmative predicate and its negation cannot be predicated of the same subject in relation to the same time and place. So by contradiction we should mean the negation of the togetherness of *B* and not-*B* (i.e., both cannot be true). This negation of togetherness has been expressed as — *tadubhayāvasthānasāhityasya niṣedhaḥ*. But according to the realists, negation being a reality requires a negatum (*pratiyogin*) which must not be completely unestablished, but must exist at some time at least.⁸ A completely unestablished negatum (*aprasiddhapratyogin*) is a fiction and as such it cannot be an object of negation (*aprasiddhapratyogikābhāvaḥ asiddhaḥ*). Now the togetherness of two contradictories is never and nowhere established in the world. Hence it follows that the negation of togetherness also remains unestablished. This means that contradiction itself cannot be established as a point of reality. It is to be noted that the realists themselves often quote in their support the following observation of Maṇḍanamīśra in his *Brahmasiddhi*:

labdharūpe kvacit kiñcit tādṛgeva niṣidhyate /
vidhānamantareṇāto na niṣedhasya sambhavaḥ //

Bsd p. 44.

[Only that something can be negated which has achieved an existence somewhere at some time. So there cannot be any negation without a pre-established affirmation.]

The matter is made worse if the realist suggests that *sahānavasthāna* be defined as *tadubhayāvasthānaniṣedhasāhitya*. The latter expression comes to mean togetherness of the negations of both *B* and not-*B*, which means ‘neither *B* nor not-*B*’ i.e. both can be false. In absolute

contradiction such an assumption leads to an absurd consequence. Negation of *B* is the same as not-*B* and negation of not-*B* is equivalent to *B*. Thus 'neither *B* nor not-*B*' would turn out to be the same as 'both *B* and not-*B*' (i.e. both are true), which being just the opposite of *sahānavasthāna*, is plainly absurd. —

bhāvābhāvayoḥ ko virodhaḥ? sahānavasthānamiti cen na . . . taddhi tadubhayasāhityaniṣedho vā, tadubhayāvasthānaniṣedhasāhityaṁ vā syāt? ādye'prasiddhapratiyogikatvam, tadubhayasāhityasya kvacidapyapramiteḥ . . . dvtiye tadubhayāvasthānasāhityasvikāra eva syāt, tadubhayaniṣedhayostadubhayatayaivān gikārāt —

On Khnd pp. 1263—1265.

Vidyāsāgarī commentary very clearly and succinctly brings out the implication of the second objection —

bhāvāvasthānaniṣedhasyābhāvatvād abhāvāvasthānaniṣedhasya ca bhāvatvān niṣedhasāhitye bhāvābhāvasāhityaṁ syāt, tacca na bhavatiyārthaḥ —

On Khnd p. 1264.

Prajñākaragupta's elaborate treatment of contradiction is a deduction from a more radical idealistic metaphysics. It is also partly deduced from the Buddhist theory of *svalakṣaṇa* which, if consistently pursued, cannot but lead to the demolition of relation as a reality. The reals are nothing but self-complete discrete particulars of the moment having nothing to do with one another. Complete mutual exclusion is only another name for total isolation. Something complete in its unmitigated seclusion cannot tolerate any relation, whether it is confirmation or contradiction. So Prajñākara poses the question: — How can there be any relation of negational contradiction between two reals standing in mutual exclusion? (*parasparaparihāreṇāvasthitayoḥ katham bādhyabādhakabhāvaḥ?* Pvb. p. 365) If still there is a contradiction somehow, both should have been negated and reduced to nothing. There is no rational way to decide that our wakeful experience negates our dream experience and that the converse is not true. So it is fundamentally meaningless to say that the dream experience is false while the wakeful experience true. Thus there is nothing called contradiction in the world of reals whether on the cognitive plane or on the external plane. That shows that uncontradictedness cannot enter into the definition of cognitive validity. Indeed the whole

question of validity and invalidity is a matter of intellectual abstraction projected with deference to a pragmatic but unreal world. Prajñākara has very elaborately shown why and how one cognition can negate neither another cognition nor the object of another cognition.

Prajñākara is an illustrious predecessor of Ānandabodha. So it is not unlikely that the Advaitist has drawn inspiration from a radical Buddhist idealist. According to both, the phenomenal manifold is only a tentative existence waiting to be eliminated by a final realisation. Now all logic and epistemology, indeed all philosophy, all talks of contradiction and negation, affirmation and confirmation, can exist only as long as the phenomenal world shows up its tentative existence. They are gone for good with the world going out. So the question does not arise if the negation of the world is real or not. It is, however, a metaphysical or mystical resolution of a logical question which defies any logical solution.

But even within the domain of logic and epistemology Prajñākara's challenge is formidable. Our experience never grasps contradiction itself as an object. There was a snake-percept and there is now a rope-percept. Now I say "It is not a snake". But this is only an interpretation of the rope-percept as *contrasted* with the snake-percept which seems to be drawn by memory in order to figure as the negatum of negation. My second perceptual experience is of the shape 'This is a piece of rope' and not of the shape, 'This is a piece of rope which is not snake, and which negates the snake of the preceding experience.' The whole subordinate clause is only an intellectual interpretative construction imposed on the rope-percept. So contradiction is not a reality even of a tentative world. Hence neither contradiction nor confirmation is a matter of experience:

rūpādayo hi svarūpasamvedanaparā eva, na tadviṣayaḥ pratyayaḥ paratra pramāṇam —
Pvb. p. 5.

We may legitimately add '*apramāṇam vā.*' (For Prajñākara's treatment of contradiction see Pvb. pp. 4—5 and pp. 359—387).

Extreme idealistic logic, which is as good as liquidation of logic itself, finds a good support from the destructive genius of Jayarāśibhaṭṭa, the agnostic par excellence. The avowed aim of Jayarāśi is to

show that nothing can be finally decided as to what is right and what is wrong, that all systems of logic and philosophy are based on questionable propositions. All human behaviour whether intellectual or practical is based on presuppositions which stand only as long as no critical thought is given to them. He begins with a thorough examination of the Nyāya theory of perception and ends with the demolition of the authority of scripture. He questions the assumption that the mark of validity is uncontradictedness. Neither the object, nor the knowledge, nor both are subject to contradiction. Nothing contradicts, nothing is contradicted. His reason is compressed into a compact expression — *svaviśayaparyavasāyinyo buddhayaḥ* (Tps. p. 15). This is a fine anticipation of Ānandabodha's remark *svagocaraśūraṇi jñānāni*. There are two competing propositions in the context of mirage, 'This is water' and 'This is not water'. Affirmation and negation independently figure in two independent judgments. It is agreed that what is or what is not is finally decided by what appears in cognition. It is an absurd situation that I do not know the contradictor and the contradicted, yet I know the contradiction. So knowledge is the final court of appeal to decide what is and what is not. In that case if the negative knowledge establishes the negation, the affirmative knowledge equally establishes the affirmation. Every knowledge exhausts itself with gripping its own object. It can take the shape only of its own object and not of the object of another knowledge. So an object of one knowledge cannot negate the object of another knowledge, nor a knowledge of one object can negate the knowledge of another object. An object being what it is can affirm only itself. It cannot affirm or negate another object. The so-called false water is as much an object of one knowledge as the cluster of solar rays falling on the desert sands is of another knowledge. There is thus no question of removing an object from its knowledge. Nor can the knowledge itself be removed from the time and place of its happening. In a series of psychic events every knowledge is fixed to its point of history. In the series one event is followed by another. So if it is said that one knowledge is contradicted by another you should say that every knowledge is contradicted by every other knowledge. A cognitive event is an evanescent point in a psychic series. This evanescence cannot be called contradiction.

tad yadi svarūpavyāvṛttirūpā bādhā tada sarvambādhitam syāt, vijñānasya vijñānān-
tareṇa nivartyamānatvāt

Tps. p. 16.

It reminds one of Prajñākara's remark — if something has happened what can make it unhappen? (*Yadi jāto'sau bhāvaḥ kena tasyābhāvaḥ kriyate?* — Pvb. p. 374.) Thus contradiction (and so verification) is the casualty of idealistic logic.

Demolition of contradiction may be reasonably claimed to be equivalent to liquidation of logic. Truth-value is the cornerstone of logic. Rejection of contradiction means uprooting of this cornerstone. To show that there is nothing called contradiction and no way to define contradiction is the same as to show that there is no way to decide between right or wrong, truth and falsity. Hallucination and normal perception have equal claim to truth or falsity, because nothing can be contradicted or verified by anything else. It is no consolation to learn that the idealists reject contradiction and verification only from their basic metaphysical standpoint, not from the practical standpoint of normal human behaviour. In practical behaviour the child and the philosopher are alike (*sadr̥sau bālapaṇḍitau*) — thus speaks Bhartr̥hari. But the question remains — what about the truth value of the basic metaphysical presuppositions of the idealists? What is the guarantee that man will one day realise the Brahman or *Nirvāṇa*, that the world of sufferings shall be negated for good? The only possible answer is — unquestioned faith in Scripture. But if logic is gone the question stands — why should we have this faith?

NOTES

¹ The Sanskrit term '*virodha*' covers the two types of opposition, namely, contradiction and contrariety as they are defined and differentiated in Western logic. But there is some difficulty in accepting *virodha* as an equivalent of what is generally called opposition in traditional Western logic. The relation between *A* and *I* propositions or between *E* and *O* propositions such that "if *p* is true *q* is true, if *p* is false *q* is undetermined", which is sometimes called sub-alternation or super-implication, is not recognised as a case of *virodha* in Indian logic. Similarly the subcontrary relation between *I* and *O* can hardly be called *virodha* at all. The sense of *virodha* is restricted to such a relation between *p* and *q* that both cannot be true. This relation of incompatibility obviously does not obtain between *A* and *I*, *E* and *O* and *I* and *O*.

So the term 'opposition' cannot be made an equivalent of *virodha* without heavily curtailing the conventionally accepted meaning of the former.

What is common between contradiction and contrariety is that p and q cannot both be true at the same time and place. The difference is measured by the logical position that in contradiction both p and q can neither be simultaneously true nor be false, while in contrariety, though both cannot be true, both can be false. Now the question is: — when both cannot be true whether we are entitled to say that p contradicts q and q contradicts p even in the case of contrariety such that 'A is a cow' and 'A is a horse'. If we restrict the term 'contradiction' strictly to its technical logical sense obviously we should not use the verb-form 'contradicts' in such a case, because both can be false. We may perhaps reasonably use the expressions, 'excludes' 'eliminates', 'negates', 'cancels' or 'invalidates' in the case of contrary relation between p and q if the expression 'contradicts' is found logically objectionable — for if one is true the other is bound to be false.

But a real difficulty arises when both the propositions are false. If A is neither a cow, nor a horse, but a camel, it is senseless to say that 'A is a cow' as a false statement cancels (or excludes etc.) another false statement 'A is a horse', for both are invalidated by the third statement 'A is a camel' which is true. Yet the position remains intact on the logical plane that if p is true, then q is false and if q is true then p is false. 'If-then', as a logical property of propositional relation, is not nullified by the fact that both are false. In other words, though in fact A is neither a cow, nor a horse, yet the feeling persists — had it been a cow, it could not have been a horse; had it been a horse, it could not have been a cow. Thus the case of contrariety involves a logical complexity which is absent in the case of contradiction. *Virodha* in the sense of contrariety is expressed as *parasparavirahavyāpyatva* in Indian logic. Considering the fact that two contrary propositions may be equally false and as such one does not necessarily cancel the other, Madhusūdana correctly observes that *virodha* as *parasparavirahavyāpyatva* is not a determinant of *vyāghāta* which means absolute contradiction. Contrariety also involves an element of contradiction in the sense that p and q both cannot be true, but what is absent here is the other element of contradiction, namely, one must be true. From all that we have said it may not be unreasonable for us to suggest a distinction between absolute contradiction and relative contradiction. Contradiction in the sense of ' p and q both cannot be true and both cannot be false' may be called absolute contradiction; while contradiction in the sense of 'both cannot be true, but both can be false' may be called *relative* contradiction which is traditionally recognised as contrariety. The former kind of *virodha* is properly called *vyāghāta* which is expressed as *parasparavirahavyāpakatva*. The latter is expressed as *parasparavirahavyāpyatva*. The term 'incompatibility' may be used as an expression covering both the cases of contradiction, absolute and relative (or contradiction and contrariety). If this suggestion is accepted and 'contradiction' may be used in the wider sense of incompatibility, it may not be wrong to use 'contradiction' as an English equivalent of the Sanskrit term *virodha*.

² That the two extremes of an absolute contradiction exhaust between them the whole universe of discourse is hinted at by Gaṅgeśa in the *Tarka* section of *Tattvacintāmaṇi* and clearly stated by Mathurānātha in his commentary thereon.

dhūmo yadi vahnyasamavahitājanyatve sati vahnisamavahitājanyaḥ syānotpannaḥ syāt
Gaṅgeśa Tp. p. 3.

[If smoke were not produced either out of something unassociated with fire, or out of something associated with fire it would not have been produced at all.]

Mathurānātha states: — In this world there are two types of produced objects — an object created out of something unassociated with fire and an object created out of something associated with fire. If smoke were produced out of neither of these two, it would not have been produced at all.

janyaṃ hi jagati vastudvayaṃ vahnyasamavahitajanyaṃ tatsamavahitajanyaṃ ca tatrāyaṃ ced ubhayajanya eva na syāt tadā janya eva na syāditi bhāvaḥ.

Māthuri on Tp. pp. 2—3.

³ Varadarāja's commentary in this context is very lucid and penetrating. Varadarāja interprets Udayana's expression *Vyāghātavadhirāśāṅkā* (Nk. III/7) in two ways — from a practical standpoint and a logical standpoint. If a person is sincerely in doubt about causality he is to be assured by his own practical behaviour. Whether water quenches thirst or not can be easily decided by sipping it twice or thrice. Such a resolution of doubt is a matter of practice. If somebody still professes doubt he should not take water to slake thirst or food to assuage hunger. His profession being belied by practice, there is reason to suppose that his doubt is not sincere. (Gaṅgeśa has shown this in *Tarkaprakaraṇa*). Varadarāja now proceeds to show that there is a possibility of philosophical or theoretical doubt which cannot be resolved by practice. One may go on taking water and food for quenching thirst and hunger as a matter of practical behaviour and yet may honestly take the theoretical position that boundless space and endless time being beyond the range of experience, there is every reason to question the truth of a universal causal relation. The relation between profession and practice does not solve this pertinent theoretical problem which, however, requires a theoretical reply. It is this theoretical reply which is attempted by Udayana in his observation — *na hi hetupalabhāvo na bhaviṣyati*. etc.

ayamāśayaḥ — kimiyamāśāṅkā arthakriyārthino laukikasya, hetupalabhāvaṃ jighāmsataḥ parīkṣakasya vā, . . . yad vā sarvaṃ vyabhicariṣyātīvat sarvaṃ mithyā bhaviṣyātīyapi śāṅkāyā anutthānam, tasyāpi sarvāntarbhāvena mithyātvēna vyāghātāt
Bodhani on Nk III/7 pp. 342—347.

Also compare Vardhamāna:

śāṅkāpi hetumatī na vā, ādye hetuṃ vinā na syādeva, dvitīye deśādiniyamahetora-
bhāvāt sarvāsatyatvaprasaṅgaḥ

Prakāśa on *ibid.* p. 347.

See Rucidatta on the above:

ahetukaivotpattirityabhyupagame hetupalabhāvābhāve'pi śāṅkā syāt . . . atraiva śāṅkā nānyatreti niyamahetoraabhāvāt śāṅkāyamapi śāṅkā evaṃ sarvaṃ mithyā bhaviṣyātīyapi śāṅkā syāditi sarvāsattvaprasaṅga ityarthah

— Makaranda on Prakāśa p. 347.

⁴ Stcherbatsky's translation which is more interpretative than literal runs as follows: "When (one fact) has duration (as long as) the sumtotal of its causes remains unimpaired and it (then) vanishes as soon as another, (the opposed) fact appears, it follows that both are incompatible or efficiently opposed".

⁵ Yathā vahnijalayoḥ parasparādhikaraṅāvṛttitvena parasparaviruddhatve'pi ekadharṁiṇi ekadā vahnijñānaṁ jalajñānaṁ ca bhavati na tu vahnijñānaṁ jalajñāne jalajñānaṁ ca vahnijñāne pratibandhakaṁ, yadā tu vahnyabhāvavyāpyatvena jalāvagāhijñānaṁ jalābhāvavyāpyatvena ca vahnyavagāhijñānaṁ sambhavati tadaiva vahnijñāne vahnyabhāvavyāpyatvena jalajñānaṁ jalajñāne ca jalābhāvavyāpyatvena vahnijñānaṁ pratibandhakaṁ bhavati —

Vāmācāraṇabhaṭṭācārya's comm. on Gādādhari, Sp. pp. 149—150.

⁶ Gaṅgeśa's definition of *hetvābhāsa* may be interpreted as involving both elimination and prevention. All three of Gaṅgeśa's definitions of *hetvābhāsa* in general, namely,

- (a) anumitikāraṇībhūtābhāvapratiyogi-yathārthajñānaviśayatvam (Aeg. p. 1580).
- (b) yadvīṣayakatvena liṅgajñānasyānumitivirodhitvaṁ tattvaṁ hetvābhāsastvam (*ibid.*)
- (c) jñāyamānaṁ sad yadanumitipratibandhakaṁ tattvaṁ vā hetvābhāsastvam (*ibid.*)

settle down to this:

The wrong probans is that the right knowledge about which is an impediment to the wrong inference.

⁷ na hi tāvat samānagocarānubhavāntareṇānubhavāntaraviśayāpahārasambhavaḥ, dhāravāhike'pi tatprasāṅgāt / nāpi vibhinnagocareṇa, stambhānubhavenāpi kumbhānubhavagocarāpahāraprasāṅgāt / sati virodha iti viśeṣaṇād adōṣa iti cen naivaṁ svagocaraśūrāṇāṁ bodhānāṁ virodhābhāvasyābhīhitatvād vijñānaviśayāpahāre nirālambanatāpatteḥ — Nm. p. 125.

⁸ See Udayana's auto-commentary on Nk III/3: — kena ca śāśaṅgaṁ pratiśiddhyate / sarvathānupalabdhasya योग्यत्वāsiddheḥ — p. 330.

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Jadavpur University
Calcutta-32, India