

## **ETHICS & VALUES - THE UPANIṢADIC PARAPHERNALIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The article addresses the issue of the ethical implications and the methodology regarding the generation of values concealed in the ancient Indian literature of the Upaniṣads. The formal contents of the Upaniṣads raise doubt on whether those seemingly obvious metaphysical dispositions have anything to do with the science of moral living and the values indispensable for a peaceful life of satisfaction. The present inquiry though embraces the ten principal Upaniṣads as a whole, is centered on the two scriptural statements of Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (1.2.1 & 1.2.4) which presupposes 'Kam' or 'Desire' as the highest value. According to the framework of understanding the ethical conceptions and moral principles based on the modern thinking, the notion of 'kam' proves useful in explicating various philosophical quandaries and in finding out key resolutions on social tribulations even in contemporary time of development wherein technological and scientific approach towards life has taken center stage. A systematic treatment of such different implications of 'desire' in different contexts does conceive the ethics and values that are inherent in the 'kam' which represents perhaps the earliest speculation on the topic. Arguments are made in favor of its universalizability, consequentiality and deontological perspective that serve as evaluative tools of ethics and of

identifying appealing values. The basic trinity of ethics- truth, beauty and good- are irreducible in themselves in the context of moral life. Therefore, these prove to be of supreme value. But these three get exhausted in the realm of 'Ānanda' that is the Reality itself. For this, the trinity is considered subservient to the Reality. Ānanda in the Upaniṣadic terminology is the 'truth of truth' and is to be desired by all.

'Perfection' has been thought of as the ultimate 'good' and it leads to the well-being of all. In the context of 'dharma' (moral thinking), values are conceived as obligatory. Rta provides propensity to the 'good' whereas 'naiṣkarmya' is another tool for realizing the ultimate good. The decision on right/good is dependent on wisdom. The ego-centric mind, despite its innate nature of good, is in conflict with this good and comes as the ground for immoral actions. Truthfulness and non-violence are the potential instruments of perfection that finally results in the 'well-being' of all.

### **Ethics & values- in the Upaniṣads**

Ethics has become a perplexing discursive event in modern times. With a shift of substance towards moral character incompatible with the hardcore law of Karma that emphasizes duties and obligations in this given universe, a renewed interest towards ethics could provide room for the right discernment of the current paradoxical problems of philosophy. The doctrinal imperative on ethics and values as discussed in the Upaniṣads necessarily harbor the problem of ego-sensitiveness with its incongruous character in a more compatible way for the overall development of humanity. The changed attitude towards 'what should I be' rather than 'what should I do' for the well-being is focused here and is the matter of discussion to maintain the condition of 'good', the basic principle of ethics, that is already within us all as if hidden in the core of a hard nut. The three most significant features that demand the shift are-

(1) The social life-structure (2) Educational/ knowledge field and (3) the open conflict between values and the inner immortality principle. Every man has the principle of ethical 'good' in him, but it is always in conflict with the 'ego'- principle that corrupts one's as well as others' moral predis-

positions. Even though the sovereignty of 'goodness' is the unifying factor, it has the risk of falling into the coerciveness of the instruments of 'ego-hood'. The overcoming of the perversive 'ego-ness' results in the attainment of 'goodness' and that should be the aim of all.

Contemporary ethics can be distinguished as the ethics of nature (Western view) and the ethics of norms (Indian perspective). According to Immanuel Kant, 'The ethics of nature is one in which the principle of 'good' in each person is continually attacked by evil that is also contained in every being'. G.E. Moore describes ethics as human conduct (virtue, vice, right, ought, good and bad) and 'this discussion of human conduct is in fact that with which the name ethics is most ultimately associated'<sup>1</sup>. It is human conduct as it is lived. In normative ethics, the subject-matter of discussion is ideal of the human conduct and not the conduct as lived. It deals with 'ought'- what man ought to do, which requires a standard predetermined. So in the normative ethics, metaphysical conceptualization of an ultimate value is essential.

Kant makes it clear that it is difficult to delineate ethics from metaphysics. According to him, God, free will and immortality constitute the essential presuppositions of ethics. So, though ethics of nature and ethics of norms differ in their content, it can never be denied that the subjective root or ground of the very possibility of all 'good' is something that is imputed in man and consequently it must be none other than the 'Supreme Being'- the ultimate ground of every existence. This is the inner immortality in man that can be discerned when the first manifestation of 'freedom' (freedom from ego) is had. The antecedent ground of freedom is thus to be conceived nonetheless than the ultimate value itself. Hence 'ethics is a science of values'<sup>2</sup>. It is the evaluation of human conduct which is connected with human good. It is to be understood, therefore, that the ground work of 'values' is definitely the metaphysical moral principle and human existence should be made compatible with the moral doctrines.

The Upaniṣads provide good propensity to such compatible moral disciplines. According to them, 'perfection' of man is the only

alternative to the ultimate values. Mind should be freed from all sensuous motives that empowers with the conscience to make powerful judgments about the right and wrong or to determine the value of various actions. The ordinary mind has the contrariety of juggling conscience because of the associated disjunction element of 'ego'. Because of this, man feels in himself a powerful counterweight to all the compounds of duty presented to him by reason as to worthy of esteem - the counterweight of his needs and inclinations, whose total satisfaction he grasps under the name of 'happiness' <sup>3</sup>

A careful analysis of the various Upaniṣadic doctrines on the moral aspects reveals that a full treatment of the virtues within oneself can bring out his 'goodness' of being-in-this world. His acts solely depend on the institutionalized virtues - 'the primacy of character'. Significantly, the Upaniṣads raises the all important question of 'good'ness of actions. Accordingly, if one has the propensity to adopt the actions enshrined in the 'dharma', the rules of ethics, one can achieve the status of moral goodness and he may continue to act according to these laws of 'dharma'. Whatever may be the temporal compulsions, the sovereignty of the 'ego' must be set down to accord for the law of dharma. The perversion of ego that remains as inscrutable makes one fall into the fallacy of wrong actions/ intentional deliberations. Therefore, the ultimate value or Puruṣārtha lies in the 'good' of actions that applies universally to the whole of humanity. One cannot deceive this 'ground' that is our innate, inherited nature.

Now, to make sense of the ethical doctrines in the Upaniṣads let me analyze the statement in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad <sup>4</sup>. The statement regarding 'kam', 'Creative movement is the essence of Reality'. It operates in a void. For man, the creative energy operates when his mind is quiet, empty of concepts and is conditioned. The result of the operation of the creative movement is the bliss of 'life immortal' (kam). This Kam is the essence of 'all light'. For man, kam is the illuminating light of understanding. It is a forward movement towards worldly existence as well as the returning to the Reality itself. To make sense of the above statement, it is necessary to vent into the innate nature of one's own being - in - this world. The

question here is: How can the ethical principles of Reality, will (kam) and the innate nature of one's being-in-this world are related? An understanding of the meaning of 'Kam' is essential here. Kam is desire or will. This desire can be of three types:

- 1) It is the prime desire out of which the whole world is created- kam.
- 2) It is the desire (psychological hunger for identity with the reality) that leads humanity towards death (that is return to the origin) - kāma.
- 3) It is the desire that motivates man to actions (ego-sensitiveness) - kāmāna.

The first one is of metaphysical significance. In necessary condition for such a kam is the conditioned mind that is made compatible with the state of existence before creation- 'Oneness' as Reality. This can be asserted as the state of the highest 'Perfection' of one's being and is the 'world'. Herein the 'purpose' behind creation ('the good' that the Reality is) and the purpose underlying the perfection in the form of the 'life immortal' get identified, leading thereby to the universalization of one's being to that of the world. This perfection has been conceptualized as the 'standard of morality' by the ancient Indian seers. Since perfection cannot be without a standard of reference, metaphysics cannot be delineated from ethical or moral principles. Moral motivation, a product of perfection is ever under the siege of the ego-element that is innate in nature. The sovereignty of this ego-function over the good (perfection) leads to actions- intentional or non-intentional, incompatible with the universalization. With a great concern over this, the Upaniṣads had envisaged the concept of moral discipline or laws of ethics (dharma). Herein occurs the important but slight distinction between ethics and morality as evident in the Upaniṣadic teachings. While moral discipline conforms to the practice of certain identified laws to perfection, ethics are the standard laws derived from the impregnate experiences. In this sense, laws of ethics are standards of reference to moral discipline. In commonsense perception, ethics and morality may seem to be one and the same. The Upaniṣads exclusively use the term 'dharma' for ethics, which stands above the real implication of the word. This reaches a stage of prac-

tice in the relatively unreal but empirical universe due to the indispensable need of the essentially communication-based living of human beings.

The innate vital heat (kam) of man in the form of intense urge to empathize the subjective ground gets converted into some sort of clarity of understanding of the facts though it is inevitable that one cannot know Reality fully in this worldly existence thanks to the 'innate impressions' of the ego. In this sense, 'life immortal' will become consistent with Reality or the good.

The 'kam' principle that is concerned with the 'movement from the theoretical to practical position' of ethics is directed towards perfection. Inspired by the kam within oneself, man desires (akāmayata) to have propensity to the subjective ground through dispensing of the ego-sensitive motivational acts leading to perfection (good). From the thought of I-am-ness (ātmanvī) which is of a mental and non-temporal nature, he practically desires to have a second appearance as one without I- am-ness (I-ness separated from AM-ness). Thereby an internal world of good develops within oneself that acts as a regulative principle of his moral condition. Such a person acts with the intention of good only. His predispositions on judgments of acts are appropriate to reason and are 'right'. He has the capacity/intelligence of moral feeling of respect to the 'dharma' (code of conduct). This dharma is therefore, that to which we are responsible for.

Now, the question of how morality can provide a social framework of values is addressed. In a social set-up, ethics of values and the ethics of actions are complementary to each other. Morality is mainly concerned with the human relations. The codes of conduct or rules prescribed in dharma provide a standard moral reference that harmonizes the relationship between of body, mind and speech. These three are the major determinants of human relations. When there is harmony between these three, man and his social relations become perfect and compatible with ground and thereby he tries to move socially towards the concept of 'well-being' of the society. In this way, moral conflicts become reduced.

### **KAM as the Irreducible Principle of Moral Values:**

'Kam' as a starting event in the creative movement has a subjective ground as 'good' that is the ultimate moral principle according to the Upaniṣads. To experience this good there are essentially two principles of morality- the Truthfulness and Non-violence. There should be harmony between speech (truthfulness) and action (non-violence) and consequently between the mind and action since the mind is the governing principle of actions. It is best illustrated in the Upaniṣadic statement 'Satyam vada, Dharmam cara'<sup>5</sup> Truthfulness is the symbol of 'perfection' or internal harmony. Non-violence or not harming others is a principle of good conduct as it respects human relations. Non-violence should be with regard to one's body, speech and the mind. This may give propensity to the good of others also. It is significant that both of these principles are irreducible to each other. In the case of a truthful person, the judgments made about the right / wrong of an act will ever be correct and consistent with the dharma. He never accomplishes an act intentionally. His knowledge- base provides him with the necessary support for the intelligent decision of the rightness/ wrongness of the action. His acts are also not subservient to the ego. In this case, the good can be said to be universalized. Such person will lead and guide the society through his self-assertive nature rather than self-suppression in speech and behavior brought out by sovereignty of the ego. Similarly non-violence that marks social harmony maintains a balance of internal synchronization of the mind, speech and action within and among the constituents of the society. The perseverance of ego may bring out conflict in the interests of the people- a desire for more and more.

Now, to turn back into the nature of desire, it is possible to spell out its three dimensions- kam, kāma and kāmana. Kāma is the arising of love for the life as a whole, not knowledge but wisdom born out of love that reveals the connection of being in non-being. When the holistic kāma is inspired by kam, it gets fragmented into a variety of ego-centric wants and needs, each in conflict with others. Such a dimension of desire is kāmana- the mother of psychological hunger for more and more and it eventually

leads to death. Kam is the highest good that is nonetheless the Reality itself and is superior to the other two dimensions. It is truth or satya. The Upaniśads treat this satya as the ultimate goal of human existence. Realization of this truth leads to the instantaneous illumination of the 'knowledge'. The three dimensions of desire can be evaluated based on the following criteria in ethical demonstrations:

- a) Universalizability of ethical values (emphasis on moral character)
- b) The utilitarianism (emphasis on consequences of actions)
- c) De-ontological category (emphasis on obligatory duties and rules of conduct)

It is noteworthy that all the three steps aim at the well-being of people though in different ways. This is discussed in the following part.

**a) Universalizability of ethical values :**

Given that morality is basically a social phenomenon the principle of universalization points towards the need for deciding about 'how we should be' rather than 'what I should do'. This is made possible with two of its most decisive categories- the moral character and the moral values. Moral education and moral wisdom are their supportive functions. Moral character is the necessary condition that determines the 'how I should be' of a person, his relationship with others and the universal constituents. It is the desire for life as a whole (kōma) and not knowledge that universalizability becomes instrumental for charting out a course to the 'good'. The intelligible world always has a purpose of 'good' in it gifted by the God for one's objective experience. This good is revealed in this created world and the creation itself ever points to this purpose of the God only. Every objective manifestation should understand this and reveal the goodness within himself as his innate nature. This goodness should be the standard of moral discipline. Therefore, the highest good is the greatest possible perfection. Through moral education moral wisdom is attained and herein lies the supreme value or mokśa or Immortality.



First of all, it seems to be relevant to filter out the concept of moral Perfection (discipline) that leads ultimately to the universalization of ethical values. The upaniṣads stoutly declare that moral character is grounded on moral law that is given to us as kāma during the act of creation. It is called 'Ṛta'. Moral perfection in a society can be said to occur when all the human beings in it are treated as equal without showing supremacy of one life over the other in any aspects related to morality. Every member conceptualizes morality based on certain normative principles (ṛta) of moral conduct or rules. Moral conduct is dependent on moral knowledge that is the knowledge of desirability, rightness, oughtness and dutifulness. 'What ought to be done' rather than 'what people do' is better equipped to provide the euphoria of good by such a moral conduct. This even essentially moves beyond the rudiments of the social norms. Such a movement is known as universalization. However, a commonsense morality, that has its constituents of social customs, traditions and opinions about virtues and values (as a moral being) may not ethically be the 'rightness' as it follows the dictates of what is done by us (what people do). But a movement beyond this morality through the universalization of such morality will lead to the ethics that is compatible with the true moral status (the a priori or the ground of existence).

To analyze the Upaniṣadic point of view regarding 'kam' going beyond ethics or transcending the ethical knowledge (purpose) does not imply becoming immoral or falling into the fallacy of un-ethicality. It implies that there is no fluctuation between concepts and application of ethical laws towards perfection. The Upaniṣads lend credence to the path of perfection as the highest value. Accordingly a perfected man never deviates from the truthfulness. Further this perfection may find its fullness of such forms of knowledge that are in proximity to the spiritual and the material well-being of man. This is resolutely expressed in the Upaniṣads that hold Sreyas and Preyas as the two incompatible paths to perfection<sup>6</sup>.

Then, what is good for oneself is to flourish by virtue of perfection. This can be said as the establishment of a human being over nature. But in

this effort one should never develop delusion towards one, the subjective ground as is commonly practiced by the modern moralists who fabricated principles of ethics on society, conscience and nature as inherence. Such ethics can be referred to as virtue ethics that can develop norms in human virtues from the point of view of thought and choice to have a life perfected by virtue. But this also has ultimacy in the form of God as 'inherence is the ground of virtues'. This inherence is undeniably the 'purpose' (kam) that is universal and is innate in every being in this world. Therefore it is more appropriate to have a movement towards this kam. Through this way one can overcome the sovereignty of the ego element.

**a) The Problem of Values:**

What is the ultimate end of human life as distinct from the subordinate ends? According to the Upaniṣads, the ultimate end of human life is nothing other than the recognition of the 'wholeness' of man that is nothing but his identity with the Supreme Being. It is an aptitude of a being towards happiness in life that is instituting of order and harmony - both externally and internally. The ultimate end lies in the production of a good will directed towards the well-being, not as want satisfaction for personal ends. The highest value, therefore, lies in the Reality. It is an end that does not require any other end as it is without a beyond. Accordingly there are three concepts of ultimate values- Truth, Beauty and Goodness.

The term 'Truth' refers to the quality of an object or a fact or even the Reality as a whole Truth is a value as it satisfies the human impulse for intellectual curiosity. Since beauty satisfies the aesthetic impulse of human beings, it is also a value. Like Truth, Goodness also is a value as it brings desirable consequences in life. Whether these three are irreducible notions, is still debated in philosophical circles.

Now, to proceed with the analysis of ultimate values in the Upaniṣadic context, one can penetrate into the question of 'desire' (kam). Many philosophers recognize it as the highest practical function in the establishment of a value theory. It is more important to distinguish between 'what is desired' (kāmana) and 'what is actually desirable' (kam). For, since

value has reference to what is ultimately thought of as desirable guiding the satisfaction of all our needs what is actually desired is nothing other than pleasure but in the final end; it is not the desirable one. The actual desirable is the unconditioned, independent pleasure beyond the sensual experience that is not subservient to anything else in this universe. It is the Self or inner being that is more desirable than anything else. It is discerned that the husband is loved not for his own sake, but for the sake of the Self which is loved above all else; riches are valued not for the sake of riches but for the sake of Self that is valued above all else<sup>7</sup>. Here the conceptual problem is: Whether the Self has desire or it is desire itself?

The Upaniṣadic approach to this problem is centered on the fact that pleasures of the world cannot be the ultimate end as objective characterization can never be conducive to the everlasting satisfaction of our needs and hence these cannot become the end as good. In this regard, ānanda belonging to the supersensible faculty is the only ultimate value. For the reason that the objective existence involves the ego-element that is in conflict with the good, one's pursuit of happiness (kāmana) outside is detrimental to the ultimate good. The Upaniṣads also mention that Truth, Knowledge and ṣnanda are reducible to one and hence ṣnanda is the highest value. In this sense, the trinity of Truth, Beauty and Good get reduced to one- the ṣnanda. Hence this ultimate value is called 'Saccidānanda'. It is the 'kam' of the universe. An understanding of the Upaniṣadic philosophy of values brings forth the notion of morality and ethics as instrumental values as they help in the realization of the self. Assuming that Truth is the highest value, it must be known or realized by the intellect. Since it is the activity of the intellect it differs from goodness and beauty. The Upaniṣads consider knowledge as knowledge of Reality. Hence knowledge is called 'satyasya satyam<sup>8</sup>'. God is Truth and His goodness is revealed only when He is known. The path to the knowledge of Truth is the complete elimination of the ego (kāmana).

#### **b) The Principle of Utilitarian Ethics:**

The principle of utility disclosed in the Upaniṣadic context stress-

es the fact that the rightness/ goodness of an action depends only on the individual. Accordingly, a person of wisdom can perceive what is right and wrong in a more appropriate way. His intention in performing any act should be treated as right only. Therefore, an ethical doctrine based on the moral conduct of the person of wisdom will be a guide for the overall improvement of the society and its well-being. Approving of actions that augment happiness forms the essence of this theory. By utility, it is meant that an action that tends to produce benefit, pleasure, good or happiness creates a sense of feeling of well-being in an individual. Further, desire for pleasure and aversion to pain are the sole motives or springs of human action.

The movement of the 'infinite mortal' is triggered by the innate nature of beings. That is to say, pleasure is one's innate nature but it is the individual who is to determine 'what one ought to do for realizing this pleasure'. It is the *kāmana* that prompts one to actions. This *kāmana* is the outcome of fragmentation of the holistic *kāma* that is inspired by the *kam*. It is the psychological hunger directed towards one's satisfaction/ pleasure that leads to actions which may be either desirable stretching to the good or contrary to that.

Rightness and goodness of actions focused more on individual characters expose the virtues of that individual. An action may proceed from the faculty of desire (*kāmana*) that is traceable to the mind. The mind has the inner principle of determination as the ground of existence and hence it cannot produce actions of its own. But there is the conflicting element called ego that has prominence over the good directs the faculty of desire to actions that are classed as immoral. Whereas when goodness takes over the ego-element, the person is able to perceive what is right through his wisdom with more transparency. His intention of action will never be contrary to the good. He is able to attain the 'eudemonia'. This then has to be accepted as the standard of morality. Considering the primacy of character as inherence, an action should be directed towards accomplishing 'what should I be'. How best one is able to achieve this through psychologi-

cal evaluation is important in determining the goodness of the act or 'to be' a perfected man. The character further promotes good if one is directed towards actions beneficial to the society or the universe as a whole. Therefore, in order to deal with the 'what should I be' it seems more promising to explore the strength of oneself- the 'inner strength'.

The more convincing confirmation of the acts proceeds, according to the Upaniṣads, if actions follow dharma. Certain acts are said to be obligatory and everyone has to follow these. Further, an act that gets fragmented due to the ego-centric variety ends in conflicts resulting from the psychological milieu. It is for this reason that the Upaniṣads provide the provision of 'Naiṣkarmya'- actions directed towards good with disinterestedness<sup>9</sup>. Now, what exactly are right actions? There are two dilemmas regarding the nature of right actions- 'either doing the right thing' or 'doing things right'. If rightness of an action is determined by rightness of motive, then there may be a possibility of misguiding the action. The evaluation of an action is certainly dependent on the wisdom of the person. For, his actions are not subject to any moral constraints, it is 'doing the right thing'. If one is a perfected person, all his actions will be in conformity with the law of nature (ṛta) and if one is subservient to the sensible worlds or ego domain, then his actions will be governed by various desires and inclinations (kāmana) that are incompatible with the nature. Hence, according to the Upaniṣads, 'naiṣkarmya' only will have the propensity to right actions that is, doing the right things. With respect to the fact of doing things right, actions cannot be said to be made intelligibly, instead, they can be viewed to be determined by desires and inclinations to the sensible world (kāmana). In this sense, disinterested actions only can be accountable for the well-being. This also explains the 'ought' involved in obligations to ṛta indicating the universality of manhood. Alternatively, it can be said that an action done with the sense of 'I' or 'mine' cannot lead to the well-being. Therefore, the Upaniṣads suggest that actions that conform to the well-being are to be regarded as moral duties.

The idea of 'ought' presents us the notion of our existence. The

mind (the ability to articulate) and vāc (the ability to act) are the two main inner constituents of man. The 'ought' can be realized when there is detachment from the entanglement of manovōgmithuna (mind- word mating or word governed by the egoistic mind), when there is prāṇavāgmithuna, one becomes perfect (governed by the innate nature of the mind). Similarly when any action is done without realizing its consequences leads to misuse of power to act (vāc) that destroys the internal integral trinity of Truth, Beauty and Goodness of the world of man. It also adversely affects human interrelations and thereby the ethical values. With regards to the consequences of actions and obligatory duties, there will always be a conflict between the two. Some obligatory duties may have negative consequences that are unavoidable if one sticks to them. But the Upaniṣads give priority to the obligatory duties rather than to the consequences. However, it should be understood that a good person is engaged in duties with a spirit of naiṣkarmya and they are directed towards the well-being only and hence whatever may its consequences be, these have to be accepted. The real consequence, underlying such duty is well-being (lokahita). Again, one can define 'lokahita' as that which is acceptable for. This implies that consequences are also not ignorable. In a broad sense, it can be said that obligatory duties should be performed based on weighing its consequences of lokahita. This is a middle ground moral path.

**c) The Deontological Category:**

To talk about the de-ontological evaluation of ethical principles, it is the society or social beings that develop ethics or rules of law that are made obligatory to all. The notion of good is parsed in terms of the need or requirements of the society and not as given or inherited. Here it is common people who make voluntary decisions on values based on their moral belief. Intentional choices are made where an emotive evaluative import is identified. Accordingly, what is moral and immoral is decided on the basis of what people think as right, good and desirable. The decision will be made as the 'Supreme value of life'. Such ethical principles will be developed by a method of public discussion that leads to a public acceptance

of right or good and by ignoring that which is found wrong or bad. The concept of right and wrong may change in time due to circumstances, new knowledge and debates.

The most crucial question here is: Can such ethical principles or moral standards be good enough to be 'good'? For, there is always the influence of *kāmana* that is the ego-centric mind out of which decisions are flagged off and again there are several moral and immoral activities within the society influencing the moral decisions, it cannot be said that these may have universalizability. In order to overcome such dogmas there should be corroboration of values with the 'ought' and doing what ought to be done. This is accomplished by choosing the right and good that leads to right and good.

Finally it can be concluded that Ethics is about the 'well-being' of people. It is aimed at solving concrete moral problems. It is deciding and acting about good/right. The Upaniṣadic disclosure points to the essential ends- *kam* (the purpose of good) or the life immortal. *Kam* is the irreducible principle of moral values and is 'Perfection'. It is the Truth. The three dimensions of desire- *kam*, *kāma* and *kāmana* can be evaluated based on universalizability, utilitarianism and de-ontological theories. Since human beings exist in the empirical world they have inclination to the ego or *kāmana* (desire for need satisfaction). Therefore dispensation of ego is the goodness or perfection that has ethical values. The innate nature of human beings as *kam* has to be accepted as the ultimate value and actions to be directed towards this only. In this sense "naiṣkarmya" has greater relevance. Consequences of actions are subservient to the *rita* and the principle of moral conduct explains the obligatory duties that lead to good.

#### **Notes & References.**

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