

Chapter- 4

A Hermeneutic of Ethics of the Critique of Reason: Knowledge as Understanding

4.1 Introduction

The present chapter aims to reformulate the discussions which are carried out in the previous chapters in describing the ethics of critique of reason through three reformulating categories. They are:

1. Re-appraising Knowledge as *Prajñā* in Nāgārjuna
2. Re-appraising Knowledge as practical reason in Kant
3. Re-appraising Knowledge as communicative reason and decentered rationality in Habermas.

4.2 Knowledge in Context

Knowledge is popularly understood as the awareness and understanding of facts, truths or information gained in the form of experience or learning. However, as recent studies remind us, ‘Knowledge attains its conceptual grandeur when it is appreciated as the possession of interconnected details which, in isolation, are of lesser value and draw attention to the enterprising query that spins around the idea of the multivocality of knowledge claims in addressing the conceptual world of knowledge. The empirico-analytical hub of meaning that operates in the widely accepted definitions of knowledge such as ‘processed information’ or ‘justified true belief’ houses a centered (centralized) concept of knowledge. Critical theories of knowledge challenge the above centric idea of knowledge and decenter the concept of knowledge. The decentered and deconstructed concept of knowledge diligently attempts a continuous negotiation between knowledge and emancipation, critical consciousness and contextualization’¹.

The present study's attempt in this chapter is to contrast the concept of knowledge with *prajñā*/consciousness on the one side and *karuṇā* knowledge as understanding on the other.

4.3. Re-appraising Knowledge as *Prajñā*:

For Nāgārjuna, the critique itself represents the core concern of Philosophy. As Fichte says Philosophy is the critique of the choice of human concern in practical disposition. The *knowledge* that presupposes and concerns human practical disposition are the thoughts that follow a formal speculative order about the consistency of judgment that reason makes about its practical concern. The only practical concern that echoes to its horizon as the ultimate in Indian Philosophical context is the concept of liberation from suffering, otherwise recognized as freedom from the endless cycle of *Samsara*. Nāgārjuna is concerned about the critique of reason that presupposes Freedom in the views of the *pramāṇa theorists*. *Knowledge* rests upon the concern for freedom. Freedom is dialectical; it concerns not only *Parinirvāṇa*, but also *Nirvana* as the abode of the Bodhisattva's *activity*.

The purpose behind Nāgārjuna's critique of reason to the *Sūnyatā* (emptiness) of views is to re-interpret *Prajñā* in Buddha's silence on metaphysical questions. The silence signifies the negation or the criticism of speculative metaphysics on the disposition of freedom and its moral practical genealogies. Nāgārjuna's base on the logical framework of *understanding* and thus *negation of all the views* pragmatically rests upon the interpretation of Silence as the postulate of freedom and its practical moral genealogies. The pragmatics that belongs to Nāgārjuna is actually devoid of its non-dialectical apprehension that makes it a form of transcendental pragmatics². The pangs of spiritual consciousness³ under the

theoretic speculations of knowledge do not serve any practical purpose. Knowledge must be made free of *theoria*. Negation of view is not negation of knowledge *as such*; it is actually the negation of speculative reason that binds the spiritual consciousness under its spell. Knowledge as such should essentially be free of speculative illustrations; it concerns the practical, the synthetic. The formative speculation involved in the analytical philosophical concern of the *Pramāṇa theorists* is not knowledge proper⁴. Knowledge as a necessary presupposition of praxis takes to the determination of a consistency of a normative judgment through the various forms of theoretic recommendations of the speculative reason. Reason, in order to systematize the normative judgment takes the form of speculative analysis and theoretic foundation of the mechanisms of cognition, ambiguously appears to be the sole-source of knowledge. Thus methodologically, Nāgārjuna's argument presupposes the division between a critiqued and a non-critiqued knowledge. Bondage and ignorance preceded by wrong knowledge and the need of criticism presupposes the limits in knowledge; the dialectical consciousness therefore demands a critique of knowledge for the sake of knowledge as *Prajñā* (or the wisdom).

The acceptance of the Real as both transcendent and imminent, the realization of Nirvana in Samsara is *Prajñā*. *Prajñā* is the dialectical form of knowledge free of all its speculative contingencies. It is the highest form of knowledge transcending both the purity and practical foundations of human thought. *Prajñā* is purely practical in nature. It is the locus of compassion or *Karuṇā*. It is the destruction of all the modifications of thought *as* knowledge. It is the pure form of practical knowledge. Nirvana presupposes Samsara and vice-

versa. C.D. Sharma says, liberated is the one who sees Nirvana in Samsara and Samsara in Nirvana. Samsara is the abode of Nirvana. The concept of Bodhisattva symbolizing the great compassion, is a critique of reading Samsara as *essentially* fraught with pain.

The critical theorization of Nāgārjuna has a practical purpose – the purpose being to demonstrate the limits of thought in judging the practical moral concerns through theoretical appraisal of the real. The alienation of the transcendent from that of the phenomenal world of objective reality and the every-day contents of life-world by the virtue of speculative conceptualization of the objective world within the logico-formative framework and that of thus substantializing the formative content to be the ultimate form of the real is *avidyā*. The pure form of rational engagement should be a means of real intervention into the practical understanding of the objective world in the form of the transcendental dialectic to realize its purpose and moral sensibility. Nāgārjuna, thus transforms his destructive dialectic in the form of *Sūnyatā* into a tool of methodological intervention into the realization of the Real, that consists in the de-categorization of the reality of its contingent speculative apprehension and thus, could justify the relation between *Prajñā* and *Karuṇā*. Liberation is the complete annihilation of the speculative forms of reason and the realization of the world as the ultimate ground of a rational-compassionate intervention and interpolation into the moral objectives of the life-world.

The knowledge of the world as inherent in the real structure of moral rendezvous is characterized and conceptualized by the dialectical form of rational

engagement in *Prajñā*. The dialectic as *Prajñā* is a *practical* rational endeavor in the part of Nāgārjuna where pure reason by its logical criticism only scaffolds the consciousness to the realm of the absolute. Thus *Prajñā* can be safely be argued in context of the practical knowledge that transcends both the pure-theoretic and pure-practical concerns of understanding towards the wisdom of the world as an immediate reality of moral concern.

4.4. Re-appraising Knowledge as the Critical Consciousness: Nāgārjuna in Context

The Critique in Nāgārjuna is transcendent of every transcendental reconstruction of the knowledge. Freedom is to be emancipated from the constructive power of reason to constitute and re-constitute knowledge into a metaphysical paradigm. Critical consciousness is the consciousness of the legitimacy of, (in other words, the legitimate role played by) metaphysics in knowledge. Re-appraising Freedom in the Critique⁵ in Nāgārjuna's philosophy, it can be assumed that Nāgārjuna's concern of knowledge is not to have any sort of possession of transcendental knowledge *as such*, but the critique of all the speculative bearings of knowledge that binds knowledge into a foul play of reason. It is only from the perspective of Freedom in Nāgārjuna's concern and the practical moral knowledge that follows as *Prajñā* and the knowledge that the Bodhisattva acknowledges as his moral ground of practical principles. Nāgārjuna's destructive criticism intends to emancipate knowledge as a practical disposition of knowledge of the intrinsic relation between knowledge and reality on the one hand and transcendental and phenomenal reality on the other. The critique, in Nāgārjuna, is a critique of *knowledge* as possession of concepts as determining the nature of the real and

argues in terms. It is a critique of the *views*, the views that gather its momentum either from the contexts of absolutism or nihilism; and makes it evident that knowledge cannot be compartmentalized under some conceptual head belonging chiefly to the world of intellect.

Knowledge (of nature) presupposes a normative engagement. Therefore, theorizing *knowledge as a normative engagement* is quite evident in Nāgārjuna's critique. Nāgārjuna, by his critique elucidates the possible relation of *Prajñā* and *Karuṇā* under the methods that critically enumerates the consideration of presuppositions of cognition's moral objectivism and problematizes the concept of *prajñā* and *karuṇā* as the real source of phenomenal engagement.

The consciousness of the Bodhisattva is technically a critical consciousness that problematizes the world as the real ground of moral activities above and beyond conceptual categorizations. The knowledge of the Bodhisattva is the pure understanding of the practical intensity of human sufferings and the compassionate moral consequence that follows as the law of action towards the mass emancipation.

4.5. Re-appraising the Critiqued Knowledge/*Prajñā* as *Sūnyatā*

Nāgārjuna's methodological considerations believe in the dialectical approach of the critique of Reason to be *the* most consistent way towards liberation of consciousness fraught in the speculative and discursive complexities of the cognitive functionality on metaphysical questions. Discursive Speculation or Speculative Metaphysics as Reason's rendezvous in *logical deduction* to figure out the nature of reality initiates within the Mādhyamika School and in Nāgārjuna

particularly a skeptical stopover on the functionality of rational faculties and the convention of cognitive engagement of consciousness over *metaphysical* questions, as consistently argued for by the *pramāṇa* theorists. Nāgārjuna's problem is the problem with the claims of Metaphysics so far as it appears transcendentally external to cognitive conditions of judgment and consciousness's attempt to proceed from empirical first principles to transcendental assessments. In other words, the claim of consciousness to re-apprehend metaphysics as the structure of reality, set as transcendental to its cognitive conditions and speculative import, and simultaneously reason's confidence on the calculability of these claims brings into question reason's competence to apprehend reality considered the aiding of the conventional structure of the cognitive conditions. A non-cognitivist approach to the metaphysical and moral domain would naturally follow.

The Dialectical Consciousness is the consciousness of the logical contradictions in thought as non-transcendental to the theoretic functioning of Reason⁶. The dialectical consciousness of Mādhyamika School marked the transition of philosophy from empiricism and dogmatism to dialectical criticism⁷. Critique is the critique of knowledge, of the cognitive functionality of Reason and the phenomena that concerns its legitimization. It is the epistemological process that brings within its investigative concern the metaphysical conditions associated with human knowledge. The course of metaphysical questioning not directed as external to the subject but duels within and problematizes the competence of reason (necessarily) as a guiding principle of knowledge directs Mādhyamika not only to take up a critical endeavor but also to obtain an idealistic configuration of metaphysical investigation⁸. Therefore, it is the metaphysics of knowledge and

experience that the Mādhyamika and Nāgārjuna in particular considers to problematize by a dialectical method of reasoning and argumentation. The critique itself becomes metaphysics (Philosophy) for the Mādhyamika. Therefore, now, philosophy can satisfactorily distinguish itself and demarcate its domain in the sense if science is a branch of knowledge, philosophy is the critique of knowledge.

“Reason is antinomical in character and cannot apprehend reality with the aid of its competitive characteristics. Dialectic is necessarily a critique of reason in its cognitive competence. Dialectic in Nāgārjuna is thus persuaded by a thorough skeptical aptitude that questions the sources of knowledge and thus reluctant in accepting any thesis as a knowledge-claim without a question. The nature of the dialectic in Nāgārjuna is destructive.”⁹

The method, that Nāgārjuna obtains for philosophising is dialectics. Dialectic as defined by T.R.V. Murthy is an *awareness* of the conflict in Reason¹⁰. It is necessarily a critique of Reason expressed in the form of two opposite forms of rational argumentation as thesis and antithesis¹¹. Despairing result that sometimes may necessarily follow from such theoretic conflicts of extreme abstractionism is recognized by Murthy as that results in unfathomable skepticism and hopeless positivism. Murthy thus warns:

“We may recognize that each philosophical system embodies and emphasizes a valuable view of reality; its fallacy however lies in its extremism, abstraction from other aspects...despairing of any settlement in this anarchical state of affairs, one may easily be led to skepticism and positivism. Positivism, as denial of metaphysics, is chronic in philosophy...Scepticism usually takes a positivistic turn by restricting the realm of significant discourse to the empirical.”¹²

Nāgārjuna does not have any explicit theory as counter-thesis for himself that he should put against his *pramāṇa* theorist opponents. He uses dialectical reasoning as a means to challenge the metaphysical position of the *pramāṇa* theorists

(particularly Nyāya)¹³. Like Kant¹⁴, the Mādhyamika denies metaphysics “not because there is no real for him; but because it is inaccessible to Reason. He is conceived of a higher faculty, Intuition (*prajñā*) with which the Real (*tattva*) is identical.”¹⁵ Nāgārjuna’s problem of ‘emancipation’ as has been problematized by him through the concept of ‘*Sūnyatā*’ would convey or do proper justice to the question as to why Nāgārjuna adheres to destructive dialectic as *Prasaṅga*.

4.6. Nāgārjuna and Hegel on Dialectic

Murthy comes up with an explicit and exclusive comparative view of the Dialectic of Hegel and Nāgārjuna. Dialectic for both the thinkers is a spiritual process, an evaluative process of the spirit toward its transcendental objective that casts its way through the rational arguments one posed opposed to the other. It is a known fact of Hegel the he has been an Absolutist whose transcendental transition is objected towards the Absolute Idea where reality and idea coincide. But because of his theoretic clinging towards an absolutistic pattern that Prof. Murthy qualifies even his study of Nāgārjuna, the transitional objective of both Hegel and Nāgārjuna seems almost same in him, provided that there are significant differences in their dialectical methodologies. The methodology that Hegel and Nāgārjuna obtains are Constructive and Destructive Dialectic respectively.

4.7. The Method: Destructive Dialectic (The *Prasaṅga*¹⁶)

In opposition to the constructive dialectic of Hegel, the method of dialectical reasoning that Mādhyamika and Nāgārjuna obtain is destructive in nature. Murthy defines Dialectic thus: “Dialectic is a self-conscious spiritual movement; it is necessary a critique of Reason. This is not possible without the

consciousness of the opposition of the thesis and the antithesis.”¹⁷ The approach of Mādhyamika dialectic is destructive, i.e. they negate by logical argumentation the standpoints on which the opponent built up their thesis, while themselves do not put any thesis forward. Paul William makes it clear by saying: “The broad approach, therefore (at least in Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika), is to take the claim made by an opponent that something really exists and show to the opponent, through reasoning using principles acceptable to the opponent, that such cannot be the case.”¹⁸ The *Prāsaṅgika* method is of the essence that it is only a critique of the standpoints, the views of the opponent which it negates without propounding a thesis of its own. The dialectic originates from a critical consciousness of the inherent logical flaws in the opponent’s argument who advocate inherent existence, to show them that they are themselves baseless.

The unique characteristic of destructive dialectic is that the dialectic itself is not an argument that should replace its opponent’s thesis after it criticizes and negates it. The dialectical reasoning or the argumentation put forward by the *prāsaṅgikas* also lack inherent existence; they dissolve themselves after they have served their purpose of providing sufficient logical grounds through arguments to refute the opponent’s thesis¹⁹. Thus Nāgārjuna says that he does not negate anything when negation implies an “essential negation”; but that doesn’t in any way reduce the regulative force.

For some scholars, *Sūnyatā* is a dialectical tool, which is used by Nāgārjuna and the critiques of Mādhyamika discipline to cut through the elementary presuppositions of speculative metaphysics that binds human intellect under

specific conditions. *Sūnyatā* is only a tool, a name that has been used by Nāgārjuna as a skillful means to derive a critical constant pertaining to the nature of things. Thus the recognition of the true nature of things as above the contradictions of both emptiness and *Sūnyatā* saves *Sūnyatā* from being a theory of emptiness.

It would thus, be appropriate to get started by re-considering of some of the earlier considerations of the problem of Scepticism in Nāgārjuna from Chapter no. 2.

“...the scope of a consistent order of skeptical enquiry even extends its limit and lies in the bosom of a radical theoretic suspension of all the traditional cognitive categories that form the sources of our knowledge about the universe. Therefore, the most consistent skeptical question that formulates the basic theoretic structure of critical philosophizing starts from the metaphysics of knowledge: *What is knowledge and how Knowledge is at all possible*²⁰.”

The question concerning the authenticity of knowledge and its sources that Nāgārjuna puts against his opponents (particularly Nyāya), is pertinent in the sense that it is posed against the fallacy of circularity that they commit “that naturally follows from the question raised against the certitude of the traditional sources of knowledge considered conventionally, represents Nāgārjuna’s skeptical temperament implicit in his foundation of critical philosophy.²¹” Scepticism in context of Nāgārjuna in particular or Indian Philosophy in general, presents us with a view that it connotes a radical critique of knowledge. For *Chatuskotivivirmukta*, as the liberating spirit from the four-fold questioning of the speculative metaphysical concern, the spirit or the consciousness (with its faculty of reason) has to know itself a fresh and through radical criticism. The spirit or the consciousness has to attain an *active role* of dialectical engagement to cut through the mist of *false convictions*. Skepticism, therefore, in Nāgārjuna is basically the

critique of knowledge *as such* i.e. the cognitive competence of reason. Metaphysics therefore starts with the critical investigation of that performative competence of reason. The whole methodology of destructive dialectic comes within the scope of this skeptical attitude towards metaphysical knowledge claims as it appears through the skeptical performance of reason that consequently counts for liberation from knowledge.

Scepticism as *Prasaṅga* has faith on the competence of reason's dialectical engagement in a strict pragmatic sense. The method of destructive dialectic is obtained as a provisional method by the reason (which is after all very much vulnerable to the same) so far as it can be satisfactorily presented that all the discursive cognitivist *theoria* is fraught with flaws. The moment inherent flaws of cognitivist arguments are logically proven and thus established, the whole methodological unfolding critically folds up itself to the bosom of the inconsiderate *sūnyatā*. This may be followed up in significant detail under the following subtitle: The Method (Destructive Dialectic or *Prasaṅga*). But for the time being, this much may be taken to consideration for the present purpose that the nature of Scepticism in Nāgārjuna follows the strictest consideration of a negating spirit, conceived by a radical critical aptitude that apprehends liberation as freedom from all *sanskārs* including knowledge as *false conviction*.

It is therefore quite pertinent in the part of a dialectical consciousness that Philosophy would re-emerge as a criticism of knowledge. The importance of critical analysis has been the backdrop of the rise of Mahayana as a separate school. Murthy says: "Refutation is the rejection of an opponent's view by an

interested party having a view of his own to establish. A critique is the disinterested analysis of Reason by itself.”²² The Reality is beyond all categories of logical framework or theoretic demonstration. The Reality is transcendent to all the limits of thought and experience. Destructively it is the negation and annihilation of all categories to thought and experience and constructively it is that for which phenomenal world including its mode of experience and demonstration becomes possible. Critique, in Mādhyamika is the reflective consciousness of the biased form of speculative *theoreography*.

The subjective consciousness is at the core of *the activity of freedom* by engaging itself in a spiritual proceedings of dialectical engagement. To stick to the ideas of a permanent soul-substance or a theory propounding complete nihilistic position means to be possessed by a view that would lead to nothing but sheer dogmatism and a sort of egoistic bondage that results to a hostile toward others, or at the most completely unaware of a biased consciousness. True spirit, in this context, is the spirit of criticism.

4.8. Sūnyatā as Liberation

Thus says the *Kāccayanagotta Sūtra*:

“The world, for the most part, Kāccayana, is bound by approach, grasping and inclination. And he who does not follow this approach and grasping, that determination of mind, that inclination and disposition of mind, that inclination and disposition, who does not cling to or adhere to a view: ‘This is my self,’ who things: ‘suffering that is subject to arising arises; suffering that is subject to ceasing ceases,’ such a person does not doubt, is not perplexed. Herein, his knowledge is not other-dependent. Thus far, Kāccayana, there is ‘right view’.

‘Everything exists’- this Kāccayana, is one extreme.

‘Everything does not exist,’ – this, Kāccayana, is the second extreme.

Kāccayana, without approaching either extreme, the Tathāgata teaches you a doctrine by the middle.” That “Dependent upon ignorance arise disposition; depending upon disposition arises consciousness (and psychological personality etc.)...However, from the utter fading away and ceasing of ignorance, there is ceasing of consciousness (and psychological personality etc.)...And thus there is a ceasing of the entire mass of suffering²³.”

Again, The *Ratnakūṭa Sūtra (Kāśyapaparivarta)* states the Middle position thus²⁴:

“The Bodhisattva desiring to adopt the spiritual discipline must cultivate the attitude of unceasing, critical alertness with regard to things (yoniso dharmaprayuktena bhavitavyam). And what is this alertness? It is the perception of all things in their true form (sarvadharmāṇām bhutapratyayavekṣā). And again, what is the nature of this true perception? Where, Kāśyapa, there is not the viewing of things as atman (substance) etc., that which does not take rūpa, (matter), vedanā, saṃjñā, saṃskāra, vijñāna as eternal (nitya), or changing (anitya). That things are unchanging (nitya), this, Kāśyapa, is one end (antah); that they are changing is another...that reality is substance (ātmeti) is one end; that it is only model (nairātmayam iti) is another end; the middle between these two extremes of ātman and nairātmya is the intangible, the incomparable, non-appearing, not comprehensible, without any position...that verily is the Middle Path – the vision of the Real in its true form²⁵.”

Sūnyatā characterizes the knowledge as free of all *vikalpas*, i.e. it is freedom from all sorts of mental construction and theoretical understanding of nature and thus to see nature without a standpoint. *Sūnyatā* is a methodological tool characterizing the nature of destructive dialectic and the ultimate nature of dialectical knowledge as designed by Nāgārjuna to methodically demonstrate the flaws associated with the view or a *Dṛṣṭi*. *Sūnyatā* is thus used to cleanse consciousness of its logical and speculative impressions and delusions and enables consciousness to comprehend nature *as it is*. Knowledge as a critiqued knowledge as such is a form of comprehension/understanding of nature that transcends all the barriers of names and forms to the pure form of moral commitment to the world

from which it originates. Knowledge presupposes an emancipatory purpose which is critically apprehended in a dialectical manner by Nāgārjuna.

A critical consciousness is a liberated consciousness. Speculative reasoning categorizes consciousness of constitutive and cognitive demands of reason of its illegitimate intervention of in the realm of the unconditioned. Liberation is nothing but the de-categorization of consciousness of this constitutive and unifying principle by radical criticism. The objective of Nāgārjuna's critique is the spiritual and intellectual emancipation of the consciousness from the constructive foundation of rational speculation and thus the method of the dialectic is directed towards the destructive argumentative theorization of Nāgārjuna.

Spiritual consciousness, the consciousness of the distinctive conditions of bondage and sufferings is the dialectical consciousness that is keyword towards the emancipation. Bondage results from attachment and clinging to things of pleasure. The intellectual awareness or consciousness of the sufferings that results from attachment and bondage is the critical reflection of the consciousness through the dialectical process threading its way through knowledge and non-knowledge. The problem of intellectual and speculative arbitration of the *pramāṇa* theorists in finding out the structure of the Real has been the concern of problematic for Nāgārjuna. Murthy says: "The conviction that the worldly means are no remedies, but make for tightening the grip of *samsāra* on us and that *Prajñā* alone can remove the root of suffering (ignorance) is the commencement of spiritual discipline²⁶."

Emancipation, freedom, or liberation that Nāgārjuna in particular and Mahayana and Mādhyamaka in large advocates, is a negative process, the shedding off of all *sanskāras*, all speculative impression that makes its own constitutive knowledge, and everything that binds us to the intellectual and spiritual contingencies of worldly affair²⁷. The ultimate objective of Nāgārjuna is thus to attain this spiritual state of passionlessness, designated by the emptiness of thought constructions or *Sūnyatā* of views, by the act of the intellect by involving in the destructive dialectical process.

4.9. Re-appraising Understanding as an Active Principle of Reason or *Karuṇā*

Understanding unifies knowledge under the guidance of Reason to give the knowledge a practical purpose. Understanding, in the present context can be defined as cognition's practical involvement or a *response* to the pure categories of reason. The response is a commission, an active principle by the free will unbound by *inclinations*²⁸ that involves normative dimension of the contemplation of the nature in pure form. Therefore it may be safely argued that the theory-praxis intervention of reason initiates from understanding. The necessity of the *response* is regulative and not arbitrary. The necessary link between the *response* and the purpose of nature thus depends on the reference of purpose to the regulative principle guided by the interest. The principle of *Karuṇā* is the active expression of knowledge as transcending the metaphysical barriers of knowledge in all forms of understanding. The emptiness of knowledge categorized as *prajñā* has been negated by Nāgārjuna in the realization of freedom in the practical sense of the term. The waning away of defilements of knowledge and action is freedom in its real and practical sense of the term. Nāgārjuna even denied the transcendental

existence of *prajñā* as a defilement of consciousness characterizing it as transcendental consciousness.

Understanding is the practical expression of the cognitions of Reason on an *epistemological* basis, thus establishing an intimate moral consensus to the mechanism of cognition. The involvement of Reason into the domain of pure theory on the essential nature and characteristic of sociology doesn't read society in its version of moral interests that emancipates the moral Rationalism from theorizing the 'practical knowledge' on a scientific basis of understanding. Compassion is the immediate realization of the plight of the spirit under the pangs of categorical considerations of the practical interest of human rational and moral spirit. Consciousness is a complexity of Reason's response to the humane demands of pure and practical interests. Suffering, as the bondage of will as consciousness under the guidance of Reason's practical interest, as a result of the categorical consideration of the multidimensional and *humanistic* demands of consciousness should be looked through a broader perspective regarding the practical role of *understanding* as a cognitive principle. Misreading Understanding as a pure theoretic instrument of cognition is to limit the scope of understanding as a practical principle. Understanding is the cognitive and expressive basis of all the Reason's moral interest of practical life-world. *Karuṇā*, the moral expression of *Prajñā* in the particular considerations of the universals is the principle that acts in the consciousness of the Bodhisattva. The knowledge of *Sūnyatā* in *Prajñā* is universal, but considered the proper understanding of the practicality of the knowledge of *Sūnyatā* as *Karuṇā* brings it back to the world of particulars that

justifies understanding as Pure-Reason's practical principle of action and compassion.

4.10. The Moral Domain and the Concept of *Bodhisattva*

While *Prajñā* yet persists to be a domain of Knowledge, the first principle of a Bodhisattva is the transcendence of all defilements of consciousness and to be critical to a theoretic understanding of the Real. The Bodhisattva is free from all the modifications of consciousness under the veiling of knowledge. The consciousness of the Bodhisattva is actually a transcendental shifting of the *will* as devoid the ego or the self-sense. Willing is Reason's practical involvement, and the will of the Bodhisattva is the pure critical re-apprehension of nature under the practical interests of the principles of Freedom and the sense that the other be free of sufferings as plights and pangs of the spirit. The Bodhisattva is free of all contingent considerations of *Samsara* including the birth and death as even above the domain of Samsara and Nirvana. For the Bodhisattva, 'knowledge' as such *is* real and the world is a moral stage of practical involvement. The knowing of the world as true in itself rules out the intellectual distinction between real and un-real, imminent and transcendental. The world becomes the abode of Nirvana and the duty towards the other's emancipation, having been immediately aware of the intensity of suffering self (the self-sense) becomes the ultimate moral end and purpose. The critique of the conceptual knowledge of *swabhāva* as to be possessed or annihilated for the sake of freedom is expressed in terms of Bodhisattva's all-embracing love for humanity and consideration of the highest principle of moral understanding of the world.

Nāgārjuna's *negation* of self as essential soul substance, philosophically speaking, is surrounded by the purpose of freeing the consciousness of any sort of illusion with an essential substantial entity. And therefore such a negation as negation is based on and purposed to a subjective persuasion of emancipation from any conditional existence. Though the negation appears to have come forward in a synthetic theoretic fashion, the purposive condition behind the negation is strictly dialectical. The conditional existence as a convention is never negated as false in the dialectics of Nāgārjuna, but with the distinctive knowledge of the difference between the conventional and the Real existence, the very essence of the teachings of *Sūnyatā* which the theory of two truths explores. The self which is free is actually free from being conditioned as "I"-self. Freedom for the self is nothing but the unconditioned of the conditioned. The self-sense is a conditioned sense of the unconditioned reality. The conventional existence is a phenomenal reflection of the unconditioned beyond all causal relations. Critique of Reason as a tool of positivistic understanding of the world of senses, and thereby the will's real involvement as a critical consciousness with a radical transcendence of the ego is the ultimate moral aim of Nāgārjuna and his critical theoretic endeavor. Freedom, thus, realizes itself in Nāgārjuna's endeavor both as a theoretical criticism of knowledge in *Prajñā* as well as practical involvement into the self-less activities towards the other in *Karuṇā* that actually involves the knowledge of the world as immediate and real as devoid of any mental/intellectual modifications resulting to passion and clinging.

4.11. Re-appraising Critiqued Knowledge as Practical Reason

The pure metaphysical categories that form the ground of Kant's universal moral principle are only practically cognizable. The criticism of metaphysical knowledge in Kant is based on the practical principle of reason either in the interpretation of knowledge in the understanding or regulating the moral purposiveness of reason. The categorical imperative is pure reason's intervention in the practical concern of moral life. The universal law of morality inspired by the universal law of nature and freedom as the ultimate moral standard that presupposes the dignity of humanity are based on the pure forms of the understanding of nature. The purpose that lies behind 'knowledge' as the apprehension of nature in experience presupposes a practical employment of reason inspired by a normative response to the apprehension of nature – 'from 'what can I know' to 'what 'ought' I do'? The normative contingent obligation of pure reason woe's its foundation in experience. Knowledge proper, for Kant, has its close consensus with reasons practical endeavor in normative contingent purposes.

The mechanism of knowledge in Kant's thesis may be summarized as the "knowledge always requires the application of concepts to the sensible intuitions that are our immediate contact with objects²⁹." Therefore, we see that without a "sensible intuition" knowledge is not possible. The attempt to derive knowledge from the faculty of knowledge alone, unaided by experience is misguided³⁰. Thus, as the critique of knowledge Kant determines the actual mechanism of knowledge that includes its origin, purpose and scope. The pre-supposition of sensibility in intuition is a practical point of meeting of pure reason with the experienced life-

world. The experience becomes purposive in disguise; and for Kant, the purpose of pure reason is practical as normative.

Kant's moral domain is based upon the metaphysical categories of pure ideas of reason, or the pure forms of justified belief that unifies our knowledge into the moral intuition on demonstrative grounds of Kant's metaphysics of morals. These metaphysical principles stand as the *moral basis of intuition*. The pure ideas of reason are not in themselves the ideal source of knowledge proper; its use is practical, moral. Though the metaphysical categories e.g. Freedom, immortality of soul and the existence of God cannot be confirmed in the scientific knowledge, the critique of their knowledge conforms in their practical use as the basis of moral purpose. The epistemological basis of moral concern is thus explicitly stated in Kant's critical philosophy.

4.12. Practical Reason, Critique of Reason and Moral Domain

The crisis in reason and its social exposition was going through a grave problem of theoretic understanding and its execution in socio-political and economic structural frameworks. The Enlightenment Philosophers were trying to transcendentalize the concept of social justice from a pure theoretic standpoint of mathematical and logical necessities. A critique of the ground of human understanding of the world, from which all other systematic unfoldings of human social and moral endeavor had been following was an intellectual and moral necessity. Science was making progress as per the rational and scientific-methodical means of explaining the cause-effect relationship. Skepticism over the authenticity of knowledge proper, pertaining to moral and religious values was natural to raise their heads. Akin to its counterpart 'Science', the age of modernity

in Philosophy also began with the confidence in human reason to provide an intellectual understanding on the branches of knowledge³¹.

So long as the metaphysics of experience is discerned by the conformation of knowledge to the object outside, the space of speculative knowledge qualified by metaphysics would be a battleground of views and thesis. The Copernican revolution suggested by Kant is a result, according to him, of the problems that metaphysics suffers to reason's performative competence.

Gardner says:

“In Broader terms, however, overcoming the opposites of rationalism and empiricism is a subsidiary theme in Kant's philosophy: primarily, it is a response to the deep problems bound up with the project of Enlightenment that dominated the eighteenth century³².”

Reason enjoyed absolute autonomy under systematic pedagogic means to promote institutional schooling of thoughts on political, social, economic, and intellectual contingent considerations of human life that would foster the growth of knowledge, happiness and virtue. Enlightenment sanctioned intellectual freedom and emancipations; from intellectual emancipation, the emancipation of all other institutions would follow.

Enlightenment “was strongly associated there with philosophical rationalism³³.” “The representative and dominant *Aufklärung* philosophy was that of Leibniz, as propagated by Christian Wolff (1679-1750) and his followers. Wolff had recast Leibniz's philosophy in an explicitly systematic form, and in the first half of the eighteenth century the so-called Leibniz-Wolffian philosophy' became

standard fare in German universities³⁴ In Germany, as Gardner says, that the Leibniz-Wolffian system had no other rival.

4.13. Metaphysics: The Turnover of the Table

Metaphysics as has been referred by Kant is a critique of the cognitive performative functionality of Reason that ultimately provides postulated grounds for practical reason or action. It is the critique of the conditions of knowledge and the ground of moral imperative. Thus, Kant defines Metaphysics as not only the pre-conditional ground of human rational faculties of cognition, but also human action in the realm of practical morality. The Copernican Revolution in the critique of Pure Reason states that things become cognizable (knowable) only when they are in consonance with the pre-conditions of human cognitive faculty. Reason is a regulative principle and not constitutive. Kant's interpretation of metaphysics, unlike his predecessors, is not something that essentially constitutes the substantial essence of the things out there which is illuminated by knowledge. The world outside simply provides to the intellect the raw materials of knowledge which the understanding formulates in order to constitute the knowable. The thing-in-itself, which the sense experience cannot vouch for, is thus unknown and unknowable, yet not unthinkable since it essentially forms the logical principle of systematic understanding proper. Knowledge is based on the application of concepts over the sensible.

The Metaphysics of willing as in his practical philosophy culminated into the concept of Freedom or the capacity of unlimited power that point to the knowledge of the ultimate or *the purposive* use of all the objects. Kant's metaphysics of knowledge in practical affair is thus guided by him being a teleologist. That is, the

only knowable unity that an object of knowledge deserves to have, in case of the practical foundation of the universe, is not the substantive essence of the knowable object but the practical purpose that it serves. The purposiveness of nature, according to Kant, actually guides our intellect into the investigation of the nature³⁵. In Kant, the problem of Metaphysics provisionally follows, as a mere inward disposition of all rational beings, which transits via the problem of the presuppositions of Representation of objects and the *a priori* conditions of knowledge to the necessary postulate of Morality in Practical Reason. Metaphysics, thus for Kant means the preconditions of human rationality that form both the theoretic intellect and the practical world along with its moral purpose that the intellect may be competent enough to make out by its understanding through its *a priori* conditions. Paul Guyer says: “The pure form of intuition, the categories, and the principles are thus *necessary a priori* conditions for all determinate knowledge of objects, conditions that both can and must be confirmed independently of the particulars claims of empirical knowledge that they frame and ground.”³⁶ Metaphysics is the foundation of both intellect in the sphere of theoretic understanding and practical morality. Kant is very much curious about the function of reason in constituting knowledge that systematize the knowledge with the aiding of the pure concepts *a priori*, that purposively takes into account the entire nature not as an abstract formulation of speculative metaphysical ideals, but the things that constitutes our knowledge from a practical purposive dimension which the nature itself has kept reserved for the cognitive consciousness³⁷. Nature’s purposive force of the provision of belief in reason on God, immortality of the soul and Freedom thus culminates into the disposition of the practical functionality of reason so far as

the commands of moral laws by reason is concerned³⁸. Thilly says: "...our reason commands moral laws, and these moral laws are necessary. The necessity of the moral law has certain implications for God, freedom and immortality."³⁹ Pure reason in its practical employment as moral reasons can constitute the postulates of practical interest, the pure theoretical knowledge of which are but only confined to illusory speculations, but quite purposive in its practical concern. Thus Thilly comes up with the following argumentation:

"Pure reason, therefore, in its practical employment, that is, as moral reason, postulates for the sake of our highest moral or practical interests metaphysical principles which mere theoretical speculation can only conjecture, but cannot guarantee. It thereby makes those metaphysical and theoretical assumptions not demonstrated dogmas, but absolute necessary presuppositions for the essential purpose of morality⁴⁰."

The deterministic ground of metaphysics of morals or the practical philosophy thus suggests the universal principle of the deontological structure of moral understanding to the effect that the moral principles or the practical principles be same for all moral beings under conditions whatsoever.

4.14. Reason: Pure and Practical

Grossly it may be argued of Kant's critical philosophy that Reason as 'pure' cannot perform a cognitive standard alone without the aiding of the sensible, but is purposive of forming the ground of practical concern that also advocates for the teleological structure of critical philosophy. The teleological structure of Kant's critical philosophy is prudent so far as the purposiveness of Reason is concerned i.e. that brings into account the practical sphere of rational life, however, the practical purpose of reason adopts a deontological perspective once the question of a universal moral principle in categorical imperative, with no reference of empirical

contingencies, comes within. Therefore it may be rightly concluded that Reason not only regulates the cognition or provides pre-requisites for the purpose, it also accommodates the *justified beliefs* of moral concern that forms the postulated grounds of human action; or in other words, it is pure Reason only that provides the ground for the practical moral purpose. The pure concepts or the Ideas of Reason as for Kant are foundations of both Pure and Practical knowledge:

“...even before he concluded the “Transcendental Dialectic” he hinted that the ambitions of reason will be satisfied in its *practical* use, thus that while its ambitions at *cognitive* autonomy are illusory, it is in fact the source of our *practical* autonomy...Kant also suggests that pure reason does have a vital role to play in the cognitive as well as the practical sphere, although not a role in which it provides knowledge by acting entirely on its own⁴¹.”

The systematic unity of understanding has thus been regarded by Kant as ultimately objectively valid and necessary. The objectives of practical reason could be derived from the pure concepts of reason in the form of categorical imperative. The Ideas of pure reason are basically the presuppositions of morality, or the moral principles.

Kant believes that:

“...the illusions of metaphysics are natural: they arise from an ambition of pure reason that is natural, an ambition that leads to illusion when not constrained by a proper understanding of the conditions necessary for knowledge but which, precisely because it is natural, must also have some proper function⁴².”

By his teleological understanding of the purpose of nature exposed in exaggeration of rational performatives that result in pure illusion of reason Kant hints towards the practical purpose of reason. And the purpose may be justified by that:

“...pure reason leads to illusion when we attempt to use it independently of sensibility and its inherent limitations in order to gain *theoretical* knowledge of objects lying beyond the limits of our senses (thus “supersensible” objects) such as God and our soul, but that *only* pure reason can provide what is necessary in the *practical* sphere of moral conduct: only pure reason, not the inclination of sensibility...can provide the fundamental principle of morality, the “practical law” of right and wrong, and, as postulates of pure *practical* reason that are *necessary* for our moral conduct, the ideas of the freedom of our own wills and even of the immortality of our souls and the existence of God are objects of justified belief⁴³.”

Kant had to limit the pretention of Pure Reason to deliver pure knowledge to have room for belief, i.e. the pretention of reason, that what Kant means is not only significant in the sphere of theoretic reason but also in the objects of *justified beliefs* that continues to be practical, moral presumptions⁴⁴ “on which the possibility of our acting in conformity with the (moral) law depends⁴⁵.”

In his practical rational philosophy of Kant advocates the strictness of the conformity of action with universal law and also suggests that the moral principle which is same for all the rational being must therefore be derived from the very “universal concept of rational being as such.” Kant is in deep concern about a strictly formal structure of universal and necessary moral principle that has no reference to any empirical object of desire for the purpose of the construction of moral principle guided by Reason. The practical principle, therefore, must follow a strict universality and must hold for the will of every rational being as such. ““If a rational being is to think of his maxim as practical universal law, he can think of them only as principles that contain the determining ground of the will not by their matter but only by their form.” (5:27)⁴⁶.” However, Kant also obtains a more

“intuitive foundation of moral philosophy⁴⁷” as that by bringing in the concept of Freedom. The ultimate practical foundation of all moral postulation is freedom which, according to Kant is quite an anthropological phenomenon.

The Ideas of pure reason such as the idea of God, the immortality of soul and freedom, as Kant says, has no theoretic significance or can add almost nothing to our scientific knowledge but all they have is the practical significance of human action. Thilly says: “...our reason commands moral laws, and these moral laws are necessary. The necessity of the moral law has certain implications for God, freedom and immortality. The law tells me to act so that I will be deserving of happiness; that is a necessary practical law...Morality and happiness are inseparably connected in Ideas only⁴⁸.”

Kant, in his second critique have been trying to establish that our ability to determine our actions is not limited to empirical practical reason where the reason transcends the theoretic domain which is limited to empirical sensibility⁴⁹. According to the second critique, the scope of reason in pure practical reason transcends the limits of instrumental or empirical considerations of practical reason by the pure Ideas⁵⁰ or ideas of pure reason as presupposition or foundation of morality⁵¹. These pure Ideas or Ideas of pure reason are: the concepts of Freedom, Immortality and God⁵².

4.15. The Ideal of Practical Reason as a Source of Understanding and the Moral Domain

Understanding in Kant is the metaphysical categorization of real world into knowledge through sense-experience. The *a priori* categories of understanding

introduces the moral contingent relations of human reason with that of the real experience, i.e., the categories of the unification of knowledge in understanding is applied to the experience by the senses to the condition that reason's practical moral employment might dispose its purpose under the strictness of the moral law i.e., the categorical imperative.

4.16. Habermas and the Concept of Decentered Knowledge

Habermas holds the view that knowledge as positivism is the tendency to prefer one type of science/knowledge over all the others. The Positivists' favourite science is usually physics or sometimes biology. But it is always one of the natural sciences, never one of the sciences about humans as cultural or social beings. Positivism claims that there has to be one single true method - not several different ones - that the sciences have to find and use when producing knowledge. The idea tells that once the method is found and used right, we will get good and true knowledge. It also believes that the same method is to be used in all kind of studies, no matter what kind of objects we want to study. This means that Positivist do not think of science as a group of different sciences, but the Science - one and the same all across the different fields of studies⁵³.

Therefore, the critique of Reason that inspires Habermas makes him to go on an inquiry into the foundations of knowledge, human interests and language to put forward a theory of tripartite mold of knowledge and corresponding human interests, supported by the theory of 'Universal Pragmatics' and the 'Theory of Communicative Action/Rationality'. It, according to Habermas, proves the human interests in autonomy, rational consensus, responsibility etc, 'for they can be apprehended a priori. The positivistic misappropriation of knowledge was that despite of all the epistemic and

theoretical difference within, it conceives and postulates knowledge as a definable single field. In his effort to go beyond this objectivistic illusion of single categorical reduction, Habermas recognizes how knowledge is constituted by human interests. He writes:

“There are three categories of process of enquiry for which a specific connection between logical methodological rules and knowledge constitutive interests can be demonstrated. This demonstration is the task of a critical philosophy of science that escapes the snares of positivism. The approach of the empirical –analytical sciences incorporates a technical cognitive interest; that of the historical –hermeneutical sciences incorporates a practical one; and the approach of critically oriented sciences incorporates the emancipatory cognitive interest that, as we saw, was at the root of traditional theories⁵⁴.”

The theoretical bedrock on which Habermas builds up the concept of knowledge constitutive interests is elaborated further by assuming the following theorems as they are complimentary and constitutive of the meta-logical and meta – critical hypotheses on the natural and the cultural and the cultural break, self interests, instinctual aims and social controls, human autonomy and values etc. The theorems Habermas discusses are as follows:

- 1. The achievements of the transcendental subject have their basis in the natural history of the human species.*
- 2. Knowledge equally serves as an instrument and transcends self- preservation.*
- 3. Knowledge constitutive interests take form in the medium of work, language and power.*
- 4. In the power of self- reflection knowledge and interest are one.*
- 5. The unity of knowledge and interest proves itself in a dialectic that takes the historical traces of suppressed dialogue and reconstructs what has been suppressed⁵⁵.*

The tripartite moulds/divisions of knowledge constitutive interests and their functional-cognitive fields can be expressed in tabular form as follows:

Aspects of human society	Knowledge -interests	Type of study
Labour	Prediction & control	Empirical – Analytical Sciences
Interaction	Understanding and meaning	Historical-Hermeneutic Disciplines
Domination/ (power)/ Systematically distorted Communication	Emancipation	Critical Theory

Whether we fully accept or not the significance of Habermas’s concept of knowledge and knowledge constitutive interest is that with the idea of the emancipatory – critical interest, which is not as direct and coeval with the society as the technical interest in controlling nature or the practical interest in sustaining social harmony, Habermas proposes to invoke a permanent possibility of knowledge being de-centered. As Habermas says, the emancipatory interest is a survival interest in the modern capitalist world/society and it develops within the society, ‘to the degree to which repressive force, in the form of the normative exercise of power, presents itself permanently in the structures of distorted communication’⁵⁶. Habermas sees psychoanalysis as the model of critical reflection, since its methodological paradigm can equate individual pathology with cultural and societal pathology and find similarities between them. In finding psychoanalysis as the model for ideology critique and the domain of emancipatory

interest, it is reasonable to see that more than anything else the conception of depth hermeneutics operative in between the technical-instrumental and the practical – interpretive, shows the reflective necessity of intersubjective communication.

4.17. The Consensus Theory of Truth

The Consensus Theory of Truth as part of the theory of communicative competence tries to answer the problem of the mutual understanding between speakers. Truth, for Habermas, is a quality of propositional assertions contained within language use. Truth as validity claim is generated and associated with the factual content of statements. Truth is not representational but an agreement reached through critical discussion/discourse. As Anthony Giddens says, ‘This in turn means that the notion of truth is tied to presumptions about the circumstances in which it is possible for arguments to be assessed in such a way that (1) all pertinent evidence could be brought into play, and (2) nothing apart from logical, reasoned argument is involved in an ensuing consensus’⁵⁷. Without the consensus concept of truth a speaker cannot have a concept of communicative competence (which is the ability to make the justifiability of a statement of the theme of a discussion) and vice versa, according to Habermas, since mutual agreement is the need and nature of rational agreement. Habermas’ intersubjective critique of the correspondence, coherence, pragmatist, semantic and redundancy theories of truth, come to the conclusion that ‘universal consensus under ideal conditions is the ground or criterion of correct truth claims and truth is constituted by this criterion’. So, truth for Habermas is that which is agreed on ideal conditions of communication or intersubjective agreement⁵⁸. The concept of truth without the notion of rational agreement fails to understand the paradigmatic belongingness of truth claims

to the assertive speech acts. ‘... the ability to raise a truth claim requires an awareness of and the ability to understand possible demands for its defense (as well as the point of making such demands), truth on this account to be understood as a kind of warranted assertibility’⁵⁹.

4.18. Conclusion

The chapter attempts to highlight the linking logic that aligns critiqued reason with decentered reason on the one side and critiqued *prajñā* as knowledge/ understanding, and *karuṇā* on the other. In other words, it associates the decentered concept of knowledge with understanding.

In Nāgārjuna, *prajñā* and *karuṇā* has been mediated with *sūnyatā*. Therefore, critiqued knowledge *prajñā*/consciousness becomes *sūnyatā* to highlight *karuṇā* as understanding and finally *karuṇā* as ‘understanding knowledge or knowledge as understanding’. In Kant, critiqued pure reason becomes practical reason which engenders knowledge as morality and moral knowledge as understanding. Habermas’ critical theory makes decentered communicative reason as knowledge which appraises communicative action, understanding. .

Notes and References

¹ Pius V Thomas, 'Theorizing Religious Knowledge', in **Knowledge, Rights and Theorization: Situating the Connectives**, Pius V Thomas Ed., (Forthcoming Volume)

² It is a form of transcendental dialectic and not the transcendental dialectic in the Habermasian way. Nāgārjuna has the autonomy of his own pragmatic domain. It is dialectical and not established as a universal fact of methodology.

³ By spiritual consciousness I mean dialectical consciousness. The consciousness under the freedom of will, the spiritual endeavour, chooses to the dialectics.

⁴ It does not give any new knowledge. By the word 'new' is always indicated a practical knowledge that may lift the consciousness to a higher kind of dialectics between man and nature.

⁵ T.R.V. Murti's discussion on the re-appraisal of critique as philosophy itself and Nirvana; Murti, T.R.V.; 2006; **The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System**; Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.; p. 209

⁶ Logical contradictions are imminent to theoretic use of reason. The dialectical consciousness actually critically transcends the autonomy of the theoretic use of reason in human understanding and methodologically proceeds toward the practicality of Reason which itself involves the instrumentality of theoretic reason.

⁷ See Murti, T.R.V.; 2006; **The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System**; Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. p. 5

⁸ Some scholars compare the phenomena or the revolution in thought with "Copernican Revolution" in western evolution of thought. And since Kant, metaphysics was fashioned to be considered to be a critique of knowledge and to find out a common basis, the common root of all other sciences including ethics in human reason [see Thilly; p. 451;]. But the consideration of Nagarjuna was not directed to the investigation of human reason as a specialized form of faculty and its competence to become the common ground of all knowledge, rather to criticize the functional framework of reason as a dominant principle that overlaps in itself both eminent and the transcendent.

⁹ Chapter 2nd, P. 14

¹⁰ See Murti, T.R.V.; (2006); **The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System**; Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.; p. 124;

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.; p.126

¹³ Richard King says: "Critics of the Nyāya school, most notably the second century Buddhist Nāgārjuna, rejected Nyāya arguments on the ground that the school failed to provide any independent proof for their own position. Nāgārjuna did not explicitly deny the 'outwardness' of objects and indeed his subsequent followers in the Madhyamaka school developed realist argument akin to those used by Nyāya to rebut the philosophies of the Yogācāra school of Buddhism – a tradition which did, in some sense, deny the external reality of objects. Nāgārjuna's criticism of the Nyāya was a much broader attack upon the whole edifice of *pramāṇa* theory and the ontological speculations that it attempts to justify."; King, Richard; (1999); **Indian Philosophy: An Introduction to Hindu and Buddhist Thought**; Georgetown University Press; p. 137-138

¹⁴ See Murti, T.R.V.; 2006; **The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System**; Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. p. 126;

¹⁵ Ibid. P. 126;

¹⁶ For Nāgārjuna, "...the only way of realizing *sūnyata* is the adoption of dialectical method which he calls in *saṃskṛita* '*prasaṅga*'. In the *Vigrahavyāvartani* we come across Nāgārjuna's extensive but skillful application of *prasaṅgavākya* for the clarification of the concept *sūnyata* in order to meet the challenges from his philosophical contestants. What is this philosophical method? It is the dialectical

method by the application of which one can show the inner contradictions of one's philosophical opponents' thought."; Mohanto, Dilip Kmr; 1999; **Cognitive Scepticism and Indian Philosophy**; Punthi Pustak; p. 20

¹⁷ Murti T.R.V.; 2006; **The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System**; Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers; P. 124

¹⁸ Williams, Paul; 1989; **Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations**; Routledge; p. 63

¹⁹ "In context, Nagarjuna's text criticizes an opponent who argues that Nagarjuna must accept the real existence of something, to wit, his own words and arguments – otherwise he could not refuse anything. His reply is that his own argument quite obviously also lack inherent essence, but this does not mean that they lack refutative force." p. 64; *ibid.*

²⁰ Chapter 2 of the Thesis; p. 5

²¹ "If we claim that we have means of knowing (*pramana*) the way the world is, or if we believe that we have such means available to us, it stands to reason to ask further: how do we *know* those means of knowing?...A means is not a means unless it does something and hence if we have the means, we have to make them effective. To make them effective, we have to *know* that they are there. Nāgārjuna therefore rises the legitimate question: How or through what means, do we know that they are there?...If our means is turned into an end, then to achieve that end we need further means. If our standards of determining others are themselves to be determined by another set of standards and then a further set is needed for the second set of standards, we may regress into infinity and our search for the final standard may never come to an end." Matilal, B.K. Matilal, B.K.; (1986); **Perception: An Essay on Classical Indian Theories of Knowledge**; Oxford; pp. 49-50

²² See Murthy; T.R.V.; 2006; **The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of the Madhyamika System**; Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. p. no. 146

²³ See Kalupahana, D.J.; 1986; *Mulamadhyamikakarika of Nagarjuna: The Philosophy of the Middle Way*; Motilal Banarsidass, Pvt. Ltd.; Pp. 10, 11

²⁴ Murti T.R.V.; (2006); **The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System**; Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers; Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi; p. 209;

²⁵ *Ibid.*; pp. 209-210

²⁶ *Ibid.*; pp. 261-62

²⁷ "Freedom is the achievement of a state of passionlessness. It is essentially a negative process and not the acquisition of merit or other values." *ibid.*; p. 256

²⁸ By *inclination* here I mean interest of any other domain than that of the concerned. The intervention of a counter interest in the disposition of a particular practical concern is not only unwarranted, but may be danger in the realization of the particular purpose.

²⁹ Guyer, Paul; **Kant** 2006, Routledge, New York; P. 155

³⁰ *ibid.*; p. 156

³¹ "Modern philosophy began with faith in the power of human mind to attain knowledge; the only questions at issue were: by what method can it be attained and how far do its limits extend?" Thilly Frank; 2001; **A History of Philosophy**, Central Publishing House, Allahabad. p. 412

³² Gardiner Sebastian; (1999); **Routledge Philosophy Guide to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason**; Routledge; P. 5;

³³ See *ibid.*; p. 4

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 4

³⁵ "...Kant's view of nature, including our own nature, is teleological in the sense that he believes that we should presuppose that everything in nature has some proper purpose and use this assumption to guide our investigations into nature..." Guyer Paul; **Kant** 2006, Routledge, New York; p. 156

³⁶ Ibid. p. 155;

³⁷ “As we saw, even before he concluded the “Transcendental Dialectic” he hinted that the ambitions of reason will be satisfied in its *practical* use, thus that while its ambitions at *cognitive* autonomy are illusory, it is in fact the source of our *practical* autonomy.” *ibid.*; p. 156

³⁸ “...our reason commands moral laws...The law tells me to act so that I will be deserving of happiness; this is a necessary practical law. Since reason commands this, it follows that I may hope for happiness. Morality and happiness are inseparably connected, but they are connected in Idea only.” Thilly, Frank; 2001; **A History of Philosophy**, Central Publishing House, Allahabad. p. 441

³⁹ Ibid. p. 441;

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 442,

⁴¹ Guyer Paul; **Kant** 2006, Routledge, New York; p. 156;

⁴² Ibid.; p. 127;

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ When Kant writes that he has “to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith” (B xxx), at least part of what he means is that he has to curbe the pretention of pure reason to deliver *theoretic cognition* precisely in order to make room for the recognition that pure reason is the soul and proper source of the *moral law* and the *practical* postulates on which the possibility of our acting in conformity with the law depends.” *ibid.*; p. 127

⁴⁵ See *ibid.*; p. 127

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 177

⁴⁷ Ibid.; P. 178

⁴⁸ Thilly, Frank; 2001; **A History of Philosophy**, Central Publishing House, Allahabad; p. 441

⁴⁹ “...the new book must “criticize reason’s entire practical faculty” in order to show that practical reason, that is, our ability to determine our actions by our reason is not limited to *empirical* practical reason...even though the *theoretical* use of reason is limited by the limits of our empirical sensibility.” Guyer Paul; **Kant** 2006, Routledge, New York; p. 211

⁵⁰ Thilly calls them Ideas of pure reason

⁵¹ “Kant calls our beliefs in the existence of freedom, immortality, and God the “postulates of pure practical reason,” “not theoretical dogmas but presuppositions having a necessary practical reference,” which do not extend speculative cognition” but “give objective reality to the ideas of speculative reason in general (by means of their reference to what is practical)” (5:132)” Guyer Paul; **Kant** 2006, Routledge, New York; p. 212

⁵² “...among all the ideas of speculative reason freedom is...the only one the possibility of which we know *a priori*...because it is the condition of the moral law, which we do know,” while the ideas of God and immortality...are not conditions of the moral law but only conditions of the necessary objects of a will determined by this law.” (5:4). What he means by this is that in order for us to believe that we are bound by moral law at all, we must believe that we are free to act in accordance with it, but that once we fully understand what the moral law commands us to achieve – what Kant calls the “highest good,” a “whole in which the greatest happiness is represented as connected in the most exact proportion with the greatest degree of moral perfection (possible in creatures)” (5:129-30) – then we will also see that we must believe in the existence if personal immortality and God.” *ibid.* p. 212

⁵³ Pius V Thomas, 2013; ‘Disciplinary Narcissism and the Pedagogy of Transdisciplinarity, Salesian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences’, Vol.5. No.1. p. 164.

⁵⁴ Habermas, Juergen, (1971), **Knowledge and Human Interest**. Trans. Jeremy Shapiro; Boston, Beacon Press. p.308.

⁵⁵ Ibid.; pp. 312-315

⁵⁶ Ibid.; pp. 22 .

⁵⁷ Anthony Giddens, (1985), 'Juergen Habermas', in **The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences**, Ed. Quentin Skinner, Cambridge, Cambridge U.P. p.131.

⁵⁸ Following Strawson, Habermas argues that what is the truth predicate's function in the language communication is that of a special non predicative communicative function.

⁵⁹ J. Habermas, (1984), **Verstudien Und Ergänzungen zur Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns**, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, p.160. Quoted in Jane Braaten, (1994), **Habermas's Critical Theory of Society**, New York, State University New York Press. p.22.