



***'Kaivalya'* in Indian Thought**

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Abstract:

The objective of essay is to define and explain the connotation of 'kaivalya' according to diverse philosophical and religious theories and differentiate it with present. Beginning with a quote followed by small description of current situation in addition to how we obliterated our ancient theories. It succeeds by explanation of primordial dogma of 'isolation' as stated in different philosophical theories and religions. This essay analyzes present circumstances along with how this concept has changed overtime. Essay also mentions the motive to re-evaluate this concept of isolation. Why it is necessary? In addition, how it benefited? Then the essay, gives a distinction between past and present theory of isolation. Lastly, it concludes by defining how our negligence leads to revise historical teachings and role of individual in attaining self-realization to set free from the cycle of suffering.

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“If *you do not learn from history you are doomed to repeat it”*

~George Santayana.

Continuous hectic life abruptly froze and tossed Homo sapiens's in their dens! No one ever thought that 'humans' would be caged, isolated, and paralyzed.

In the pursuit of success and high-tech amelioration, we obliterated the concepts of Indian philosophical and religious traditions that taught the prerequisite of human life.

"Isolation" sounds horrifying! As Sooner or later humans transmogrified into beings that are more gregarious.

We terminated our ancient philosophical and religious concept of solitude, detachment, or separation, which are crucial for liberation from the cycle of birth-rebirth and thus eventually are the central pillar to attain *Moksha*.

The Primordial credo of 'isolation':

The antediluvian dogma of 'Isolation' means the segregation of Purusha from Prakriti and liberation from rebirth.

Diverse philosophical and religious theories distantly illustrate the conception. There is only one semblance in all the philosophical theologies and religious concept of 'isolation/Kaivalya' and that is detachment from the world and attaining liberation from the cycle of rebirth. *Let us conceive disparate philosophical and religious theories linked with isolation/Kaivalya --*

The yoga sutras of Patanjali:

The 34 yoga sutras Of Patanjali elucidate-'Kaivalya (perfect independence) comes when the Gunas (qualities), devoid of motive, become latent. Or the power of consciousness gets established in its own nature'ⁱ

Yoga sutras suggests~

"After the dissolution of avidya (ignorance),

Comes the removal of communion with the material world,

This is the path to Kaivalya".

– YOGA SUTRA (Sadhana Padas) 2: 24-25ⁱⁱ

Patanjali divided the whole knowledge of yoga into 4 chapters of **“Yoga**

Sutras", In Sanskrit, known as four Padas.

The fourth chapter of Patanjali yoga sutra is a collection of 34 sutras that tells the result of yoga or the concept of freedom. ⁱⁱⁱ

Upanishads:

Muktika Upanishad explains it as the most superior form of Moksha and the essence of all Upanishads, higher than the four types of Mukti. In section 2 of the same Upanishad, Rama mentioned that *Kaivalya-Mukti is the ultimate liberation (both jivanmukti and Videhi-Mukti) from karma and it can be attained by everyone through studying the 108 authentic Upanishads thoroughly from a realized guru, which will destroy the three forms of bodies (gross, subtle and causal)* ^{iv} In the early verses of the **Yogatattva Upanishad**, the simultaneous importance of yoga and Kaivalya (knowledge) is affirm, and declared mutually complementary and necessary.

"I relate to you the means to be employed for destruction of errors; without the practice of yoga, how could knowledge set the Atman free? Inversely, how could the practice of yoga alone, devoid of knowledge, succeed in the

task?

The seeker of Liberation must direct his energies to both simultaneously. The source of unhappiness lies in Ajnana (ignorance);

Knowledge alone sets one free."

- Yogatattva verses 14-16^v

The text defines "knowledge", translates Aiyar – a Sanskrit scholar as "through which one cognizes in himself the real nature of *Kaivalya* (Moksha) as the supreme seat, the stainless, the part less, and of the nature of sachhidanand" (truth-consciousness-bliss)

Jainism:

Kaivalya alias kevala jnana means all knowing/ omniscient in Jainism it somewhere around mean as complete understanding^{vi}. Jain scriptures speak of twelve stages through which the soul achieves this goal. A soul who has attained kevala jnana, apprehended as kevalins. According to the Jains, only kevalins can comprehend objects in all aspects and manifestations; others are only capable of partial knowledge^{vii}.

Metonyms of "Isolation" in correlation with Buddhism:

Whereas in Buddhism The words *Moksha*, nirvana (*nibbana*) and Kaivalya are sometimes used synonymously,^{viii} because they all refer to the state that liberates a person from all causes of sorrow and suffering.

Nirvana, a concept common in Buddhism, is a state of realization that there is no self (no soul) and Emptiness; while *Moksha*, a concept common in many schools of Hinduism, is acceptance of Self (soul), realization of liberating knowledge, the consciousness of Oneness with Brahman, all existence and understanding the whole universe as the Self.^{ix}

Kaivalya, a notion analogous to *Moksha*, rather than nirvana begins in some schools of Hinduism such as the Yoga school. Kaivalya is the realization of aloofness with liberating knowledge of one's self and union with the spiritual universe. Example- the yoga sutras of Patanjali suggests isolation leads to liberation.

These were some contrasting philosophical and religious theories expounding the notion of isolation in Indian thoughts. Overtime this concept of "isolation" has transformed staggeringly. Due to the prolonged span, there appears a generation gap which has altered the connotation of the concept.

Contemporaneous catastrophe:

The Entire world smacked by covid-19 pandemic, this treacherous disease has no cure yet. The whole of humanity is at risk. Mighty humans got confined into their dwellings moreover detached from their social live and this induced grievous mental and physical health complications. This virus proved to be a threat to the lives and had oppressively perpetrated other activities too. These atrocious circumstances bring about a stark contrast between the concept of isolation written in the philosophical and religious theologies/ theories and the conception according to present scenario, which has changed drastically overtime.

The humankind is in rat race behind accomplishments and wealth, which

consecutively mutated them in rapacious human beings. The covetousness sorely afflicted the ecosphere. Previously before isolation people were so engrossed in work that they hardly spent quality time with their close ones and this had unpleasant effect on their mental health including children as well as adults. This hectic life prompts to family breakdown, mental health issues, and zillions of problems. Hence, Current state of isolation emerged due to Covid-19 pandemic gave us time and opportunity to re-think and reflect on the whole purpose of Isolation and detachment.

Motive to re-evaluate notion of “isolation”:

Homo sapiens have indulged in so many activities that in real they never have had time for them to introspect and rethink about their own benefit. In this hustle and bustle, humans underestimated themselves; they consign to oblivion the old teachings of religious preachers and philosophical thinkers. The isolation, which emerged due to COVID-19 pandemic, gave us time to reevaluate about these concepts.

We have seen in past few months how humans introspects in solace, unleashed inner talents and explored many new hobbies. For example – cooking, painting, yoga, concerns regarding mental health etc.

A beautiful poem of “Pablo Neruda” named “keeping quiet” explains how moments of silence can create mutual understanding among humans and can benefit them.

Here is an extract from the poem ~

*“Now we will count to twelve
and we will all keep still
for once on the face of the earth,
let's not speak in any language;
let's stop for a second,
and not move our arms so
much” (paragraph1)*
*“Fishermen in the cold sea
would not harm whales
and the man gathering salt
would not look at his hurt
hands” (paragraph3)^x*

The poet urges humans to be quiet; he wants moment of silence on the earth. In the moment of inactivity “*Fishermen in the cold sea would not harm whales*”, this line is suggestive of the thought that humans would not destroy nature.

“And the man gathering salt would not look at his hurt hands” this line is suggestive of the thought that salt gatherers will be able to tend to his wounded hands for which he had no time earlier. Thus, both nature and human will be able to recover^{xi}.

The poet mentioned only few moments can change so much, then envisage the outcomes of this “isolation” probably due to COVID-19 may have had?

Distinction betwixt past and present:

The archaic theory of “isolation / kaivalya” in uncomplicated words revolve around ‘attainment of self-actualization and self-realization.’ After the attainment, the person is enlightened and actually knows why it is necessary to attain Moksha. The only motive behind people seeking Moksha is that they are aware of the fact *“The world is transient (anica) and constantly changing; it is soulless (anatta) as there is nothing permanent or eternal in it.”*^{xii}

These theories of kaivalya, Moksha, or isolation are beyond the intellect of lay persons. They do not possess the mental ability to self-realize the need to rise above these worldly things as they entrap in the cycle of sufferings

We have closely analyzed how generation gap resulted in transition in essence of “ancient isolation theory”. Firstly, the very fact that humans have transmogrified into a ‘social butterfly’ and now they will loathe refurbishing into ‘an antisocial and isolated bug’. Secondly, in present scenario this isolation do not mean so-called ‘complete separation/detachment’ as these social beings allied with each other through different means, undoubtedly by social media”. These worldly things have hypnotized all of us and so forth the real connotation of isolation was vanished.

CONCLUSION:

The humans never focused on historical teachings of kaivalya or isolation and today they are bound to revise them, as these conceptions are already there in our subconsciousness but constantly ignored because we are so engrossed in the worldly pleasures or due to generational gap. The dogma of isolation has diverse theories that vary from religions to philosophers. The basic theme of ‘isolation’ mentions to detach and isolate oneself from the world in order to attain liberation from the cycle of sufferings. Over time, this

notion has changed drastically. Current situation of COVID-19 gifted us a while to really think and introspect on the concept again but in present scenario the real meaning of kaivalya or isolation did not prove the basic ancient theory as people are still connected to the worldly things and had not attained enlightenment. Thus, it is difficult for lay-persons to understand the meaning

as it is beyond their intellect. “It is the individual effort which is really needed to attain self-actualization, and without self-realization no one can attain it.”^{xiii}

“Be the lamps unto yourselves as all of you must work out your own liberation”

~Gautama Buddha

ⁱ (shivanand, kaivalya, 2011) retrieved from

http://sivanandaonline.org/public_html/

ⁱⁱ (johnston, 1912) retrieved

from yogasutrasofpata00pata

ⁱⁱⁱ (ashish, 2020) retrieved from

<https://fitsri.com/yoga/patanjali-yoga-sutra>

^{iv} (Warrier). Retrieved from

<http://www.vedarahasya.net/muktika.htm>.

^v (Aiyar, Narayanasvami 1914). retrieved from

(<https://archive.org/stream/thirtyminorupani00xxxxuoft>) Archive Organization.

^{vi} (Sharma, Candradhar 1991) “Critical survey of Indian philosophy p168,173,256”. Retrieved from <https://books.google.com/books?id=Y3gQVd5WogsC>

^{vii} (Jaini, Padmanabh S , 2000)

(Jaini, Padmanabh S., 2001).

retrieved from

https://books.google.co.in/books?id=HPggiM7y1aYC&printsec=frontcover&source=gsbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false,

https://books.google.co.in/books?id=ZlyDot9RyGcC&redir_esc=y

^{viii} (Aiyar, Transl. 1914) retrieved from

(<https://archive.org/stream/thirtyminorupani00xxxxuoft>) Archive Organization. For example, the Adhyatma Upanishad uses all three words nirvana, Kaivalya and *Moksha* (Verses 12, 16, 69, 70)

^{ix} (David Loy ,1982) “enlightenment in Buddhism” (Vedanta): “ Are Nirvana and Moksha the Same?, International Philosophical Quarterly”

^x Ncert, flamingo class 12th (2006)

^{xi} (Arihant,2017-18)

^{xii} (Ncert, 2007) “class 12th ancient india”

^{xiii} (Bodhanand,2012) “ jivan mukti”