

THE COSMOS OF TRUTH AND REASON IN RELIGION

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Abstract

This paper examines the cosmological aspects of Truth and Reason in religion, focusing on the philosophical doctrines of Guru Nanak and Saint Augustine. It analyzes concepts of Harmony and Discord, Truth and Reason, and Reminiscence in both Eastern and Western traditions. The research methodology involves collecting and analyzing data from theoretical fieldwork and analyzing it from a semiological point of view. The objectives are to analyze the impact of Harmony and Discord on humans, the existence of God and its importance for human beings, evaluate the concept of Truth and Reason with primary notions of Faith and logic, ascertain how harmony and balance could be achieved by a proper correlation of Faith and Reason, and examine the correlation between Indian (Guru Nanak) and Western (St. Augustine) Philosophical thoughts of theology, beliefs, and social norms. In all religions, there are two levels: reflection and thinking, where philosophers discourse on universal ideas of creation and destruction, life and death, and the universal principles of nature. Anthropology involves every aspect of nature transformed into a god or goddess, with houses of worship, temples, and gods and goddesses installed as statues. Guru Nanak criticized the dominance of religious worship and its corrupting effects on society in the fifteenth century India. St. Augustine, a prominent theologian, wrote numerous works, including his famous 'Confessions' and 'The City of God', offering a theological philosophy of God. He was both an essentialist and existentialist, emphasizing the finitude of man and individual responsibility. Augustine believed that rational thought was at the heart of his philosophy, as both philosophy and religion were quests for the same thing: truth.

Keywords: Religion, Guru Nanak, Saint Augustine, Confessions.

INTRODUCTION

This paper elaborates the cosmological aspects of Truth and Reason in religion, with special reference of the philosophical doctrine of Guru Nanak and Saint Augustine. In the first section, I have presented the interpretation of the major compositions of Guru Nanak and the Religious Discourse. Guru Nanak's views have universal import, significance and reach. In these compositions, we have discussed the conceptual constructs, which include His cosmological vision, His ideas about the destiny of man. The Second part describes the philosophical meditations of Saint Augustine.

Our interest in the philosophy of Saint Augustine is because, both in Saint Augustine and in Guru Nanak, we deal with the religious discourse. There is obviously no historical linkage. Saint Augustine belonged to the fourth century, Guru Nanak to the fifteenth. The comparison or correspondence between these two thinkers is due to the similarity of themes, the conceptual and cosmic vision that they represent. A comparison of this order generally called typological as compared to historical in the ordinary sense of the term.

NEED OF THE STUDY

This Study aims to analyses the important concepts of Harmony and Discord, Truth and Reason, Reminiscence. To achieve this objective, the researcher collected and analyzed the

data with three main theoretical propositions around the aspects of Cosmological Semiotics in the East and West. The first important step is that of harmony and discord. The second concentrates on the notion of Truth and Reminiscence in the writings of Saint Augustine in the fourth century. The third step in this direction is theology of Man and God a comparative study with St. Augustine and Guru Nanak. The study would provide useful insights into the human beings psychological and intellectual behaviors. These inputs would help understand man's overall attitude towards life and theology. Further, the findings would be fruitful to the human beings in formulating appropriate spiritual and religious policies. Thus, increasing the efficiency to human life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective that a researcher belonging to Eastern tradition should get an understandable impression of Western tradition can achieved only if both the traditions can be presented according to a generally common plan and common concepts. The present study undertakes to do this by introducing the Indian (Guru Nanak) and western (St. Augustine) philosophies. The objectives of the present study are -

- To analyze the impact of Harmony and Discord on the human beings.
- The objective of this study is detailed analysis about the question of the existence of God and the importance of God for human beings.
- To evaluate the concept of Truth and Reason with the primary notions of Faith and logic.
- To ascertain that how the discourse of harmony and balance could be achieved by a proper correlation of Faith and Reason, further how it leads to re-integration with the Almighty God.
- To examine the correlation between Indian (Guru Nanak) and Western (St. Augustine) Philosophical thoughts of theology, beliefs and social norms.

RESEARCH GAP

Through the review of literature, it observed that there are several studies in the domain of east and west philosophical theories respectively. Various researchers have conducted research on western as well as Indian belief and intentions in their respective philosophical areas. However, to the best of our knowledge, no such study has conducted on Cosmological Semiotics with reference of Guru Nanak and St Augustine from Western traditions together. Therefore, this study tries to fulfill this gap and study the effects of discord and disharmony on the condition of human life.

That is why, there is a real need now, however difficult and ambitious the task, to present both Guru Nanak and St. Augustine philosophers together, not merely their outstanding characteristics but their concepts and connections with life.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the way in which research problem formulated for the research study solved systematically. The study used the primary / secondary data, which collected from theoretical fieldwork. The data analyzed from semiological point of view. The significant impetus behind this study is to comprehend the views of East, as well as west philosophers about human condition. To analyze the data both semiological as well as philosophical techniques applied. This is a descriptive and empirical type of research, which includes fact-findings of different kinds of spiritual and theological theories.

THE COSMOLOGY OF GURU NANAK

“Reviewing Guru Nanak’s distinctive position, we notice that his life as a preacher of righteousness began with the statement, ‘There is no Hindu and no Musalmān.’ He fearlessly attacked idolatry, and, if he did not rise to a higher degree of spiritual enlightenment, we can only say that Christian truth had not been conveyed to him.”

Guru Nanak’s incisive mind and revolutionary trans valuation of values made him a link between yesterday and tomorrow of human destiny and a mediator between antagonistic cultures and civilizations. Guru Nanak repudiates the caste system and declares noble character rather than noble birth as the real test of human excellence. Human beings steeped in ignorance, superstition could not afford to be adventurous, and this made them inert, fatalistic, passive, bigoted and alienated. This agitated the mind of Nanak especially when he visited the holy places of Hindus and Muslims. He regarded ignorance as the greatest sin and superstitions the gravest sacrilege.

In the first Pauri of Japji, Guru Nanak has rejected the ways of speculative thoughts that merely pay lip service. Life was real to Guru Nanak. The political, social and religious pressure on the common person was so great that he could not lead a life of mere thinking a lack of times nor could he lead a life merely by keeping silent where there was so much hypocrisy and oppression on all sides from top to bottom. Social avarice or hunger could be satisfied as lust for woman, wealth, pursuit of gold, multi-motivated tricks, shackles of desire, alluring beauty and “lakh sianpa” clever speculations could not finally succeed. However, what was the way of truth? How could the way of falsehood be rent asunder?

GURU NANAK’S CRITIQUE OF TRADITION AND THE RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE

In all religions, there are two levels. There is the level of reflection and thinking. This is the domain of the philosophers, who discourse on the universal ideas of creation and destruction,

of life and death. They attempt to analyse the universal principles of nature. They reflect on what truth and justice represent for the whole humanity.

The other level is that of anthropology. At this level, every aspect of nature transformed into a god or goddess. The houses of worship, the temples are constructed and the gods and the goddesses installed as statues, as human figures of male and female. In ancient Egypt, in Greece, in India, this pattern followed. In these traditions, the devotees worshipped gods of water, fire, rivers, mountains, wealth, vengeance, health, disease, creation and destruction. The rituals became more important than the philosophies of truth and harmony of the philosophers and thinkers.

In India, the gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are supposed to represent the principles of creation, growth and destruction. The six great schools of philosophy presented the most logical explanations of these universal principles. The Vedant ins concentrated on the absolute immortality and eternity of the Soul, the Spirit. For the philosophers of the materialist schools of Sankhya, the Matter that was eternal. These were most profound philosophical speculations. However, these theoretical propositions could not satisfy the public, and like the Egyptians and the Greeks, the Hindus began to worship the statues, the stones, instead of meditating on their highly complex conceptualizations. The universality of philosophical ideas invariably transformed into the specificity of these rituals. The scientific explanations forgotten. They replaced by superstition and blind worship.

In Christianity, there are statues of Jesus Christ and Mary and hundreds of local saints, which serve the same function as gods, and goddesses of Hinduism. In Islam, the worship of saints, pirs, faqirs and their burial places is very common. The rites and rituals take over. The philosophers and thinkers always forgotten. They found only in the libraries. The anthropological level of *rahit maryada*, of the codes of dress and diet, of the ceremonies at the time of birth, marriage and death become the most important aspect of religious living.

In the fifteenth century India, Guru Nanak reflected upon the dominance of these modes of worship and the way they had corrupted the social fabric of the country. His critique covered all aspects of society, the superstitions and the ignorance in the religious domain and the absolute decadence in social and political life.

kal kātī rāje kasāi dharam pākh kar udreā.¹

The above composition took from Rag Majh ki var, pauri 16, slok 1. Guru Nanak says, in this age of Kaliyug, religion has withered away. The kings are butchers and the populace suffers all indignities. There is the darkness of falsehood all over. The moon of truth hidden under the clouds of corruption. Deception and betrayal are the order of the day.

kūr rājā kūr parjā kūr sāsā l²

This quotation is taken from Rag Asa, here Guru Nanak expresses the idea that the rulers, the ruled, the world at large are all drenched in falsehood and corruption. The palaces, the mansions, the huts and the householders are stuck in dirty deals. All gold and silver, all dresses and diets, everything and every being eats, sleeps, lives in this darkness of deception. There is no honesty between husband and wife, between friends and relations. This world is transitory, a matter of few days. There is nothing permanent. Only the Being of the Creator is eternal.

lab pāp due rājā mātā kūr hoā sikhār ॥³

Here, this composition again from Rag Asa, shows that greed and lust have taken over all sections of society. The dark clouds of falsehood are all over. Instead of love and sincerity, there are passion and desire of the body and the wealth. The populace is blind to all that is good and just. They eat rotten corpses. The learned dance before the ignorant, they shout and yell. Knowledge has given way to ignorance. The foolish Brahmin deceives himself and the devotees. He lives on the charity of others. There are no rights and duties. The Yogi makes fool of the simple people. He pretends to be a yogi, a man of austerity and discipline but he lives with his women. He deals in dirty deeds. There is no question of honour and sincerity.

vāin cele nacan gur ॥⁴

This shabad, again from the same bani of Guru Nanak, expresses the idea the disciples gather. The gurus dance. Their heads move. There is dust all over. It covers the heads and hearts of the dancers and the devotees. All this done for a few loaves of bread. All this indignity, this false spectacle to deceive the ignorant populace.

Ādrū chūthe pej bāhr dunīā ādr phel ॥⁵

This composition is also from Rag Asa, “In Guru Nanak Bani, the term *Tiratha* refers to a holy place but Nanak lays stress on the inner piety all through. He does not advise one to go out to holy places for the purity of mind and heart. According to him, bathing at the holy places is useless. If one pleases the Lord that alone constitutes bathing at Tiratha. The subjugation of five senses in itself amounts to dwelling at a holy place. God is not pleased through visiting the holy places. Rather, according to him, true knowledge acquired through the *Guru* is the true *Tiratha*. Lakhs of good actions, meritorious deeds and visiting the holy places are false in the absence of union with the Lord.”⁶

Guru Nanak adopted a novel and dramatic technique to shed the superstitions of the people -- bathing at Hardwar and offering water to the sun, under the belief that it would quench the thirst of their departed, near and dear ones.

Those who are drenched in inner dirt and falsehood but pretend outer purity are doomed to a life of evil deeds. It is only the true knowledge of purity and piety, of love and sincerity that

helps a man devoted to God. In the absence of truth and love, the evil men do not see the wrath of God. There will never be peace and harmony in false deals. The Creator will never approve cheating and deceiving.

ād sac jugād sac || hē bhī sac nānak hosī bhī sac ||⁷

For Guru Nanak the sublime, divine Truth is the basis of the harmony and the rhythm of this universe. In the beginning of the beginning, there was Truth. Through the ages, this Truth anchored the boat of humanity. When it will be all over, this absolute, eternal Truth will continue to inhabit the void.

sac khand vase nirākār ||⁸

The Formless dwells in the universe of Truth. There are several levels of human existence. From the domain of deeds and duties, we move on to the domain of knowledge. Ultimately, we reach the spiritual domain of Truth. This Truth is the basis of the anthropological order but it also transcends this order to arrive at the most abstract and conceptual order of sublime consciousness.

At the anthropological level, all religions are different from each other. They are all stuck in their specific houses of worship, their rites and rituals. There are rules of diets and dresses. There are regulations, which determine the right or wrong social behavior. There are differences of race and gender, castes and creeds. There are all kinds of hierarchies. Guru Nanak's critique covers all these outer manifestations. Clearly, he denounces all rites and rituals, all ceremonial worships, all austerities and penances, all pilgrimages, all holy dips.

Yet, we know that it is not enough to have faith in God, to reflect and meditate on the rhyme and reason of the cosmic universe, to lead a life of honesty, sincerity, love and charity to be a Christian, a Muslim, a Hindu or even a Sikh. To be a member of a given religious order, one has to follow its anthropological parameters, its *rahit maryada*. This religious shell can never be broken whatever the philosophers, the great thinkers may discern. This is the greatest paradox of the religious discourse.

We continue with the cosmological discourse of Saint Augustine.

THE COSMOLOGY OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

In the medieval philosophy, there is a close connection between philosophy and theology (Christian doctrine). In the thirteenth century, the medieval philosophers would not be regarded as philosophers at all, but as theologians.

From the beginning of the medieval philosophy, the most important theologian and greatest philosopher was St. Augustine. He was educated in schools at Thagaste, Madauros and Carthage, where he studied philosophy. In 373, he greatly inspired by Cicero's Hortensious.

Although he raised in Christian thought, he was also attracted to Manichaeism. For some years, he became a Manichean, a member of a religious sect that believed there were two gods, one good and one evil. Around 383, he moved to Italy to teach rhetoric first in Rome and then in Milan. There he was greatly influenced by St. Ambrose and Neoplatonic philosophy. After reading Plotinus he became a Catholic, converted to Christianity and Ambrose baptized him in 387. Until he died in 430, he held the position of Bishop at Hippo for approximately thirty-four years.

Religious scholar and philosopher, St. Augustine produced literary works, including five million words of his work, a hundred books, treatises on various topics, over two hundred letters, and more than five hundred sermons.

Augustine's two most famous writings are his 'Confessions' (completed in 397) and 'The City of God' (written in 413-426). The former is an autobiography. The latter, he offers as theological philosophy of God.

Augustine was a memorable and persuasive preacher and promoter of Church in difficult political times whose work shaped medieval thought or western Christianity as no one else did.

For Augustine, it is not the case that the less good there is, the eviller it is. Good and evil not related as positive and negative, so that a certain degree of evil may be defined as simply the absence of a certain degree of goodness. Something with only a low degree of goodness is not thereby automatically evil. It is evil only if it ought to have a higher degree of goodness and does not actually have it. To think otherwise, Augustine says, is like blaming the earth because it is not the heavens. Higher things ought to 'govern and rule' (have power over) lower ones.

Augustine regards 'evil' as injustice or disorder, when lower things have power over the higher, reversing their proper order. Evil then is not an entity on the hierarchy of reality, it is an arrangement of things on that hierarchy otherwise than they ought to be arranged. To ask how evil arises in the world is to ask how it comes about that lower things have power over higher ones.

St. Augustine was an active participant in his life. His book *The Confessions* is one of the most poignant and sincere autobiographies to date. He had seen life in all its colours. Because of his diverse and very rich life experiences, he could not look upon man as an object; rather he studied man from within. As in existentialism, Augustine also emphasizes the finitude of man. "St. Augustine is both an essentialist and an existentialist. He is known as an essentialist because essences and ideas of God play a major role in his philosophy. He is also an "existentialist lyricist of religious experience and formal theologian".⁹

“God created the world, who or what is able to upset the order God has established? Augustine's answer is: Human beings do it. The world as God created it was, and remains, justly and properly arranged; he is not responsible for evil. On the contrary, human beings bear those responsibilities, since they are the ones who unjustly give lower things power over higher ones.”¹⁰

Like many other philosophers and religious thinkers, St. Augustine laid stress on individual responsibility, though he does this in the context of a universal metaphysics. According to the Encyclopedia of Philosophers and Religious Leaders, as bishop, Augustine articulated his major theological themes in controversies. Against the Manichaeans, he asserted there was only one, good God who, although creator of all, was not responsible for evil, which arose from Adam's willful disobedience.

Like Plato, Augustine believed in the soul and body opposition. According to Plato, human soul was eternal. It was of the same essence as that of the Supreme soul or God. If the soul plays dominant role, the essence of the human soul unites with the Supreme soul. There is union and blessing. Augustine believes that the impulses of human body are an obstacle in spiritual realization.

According to Augustine, heart is restless until it rests in Thee. “Augustine used a kind of causal argument to prove the existence of God. God created the world out of nothing. Further, the world is evil and evil according to Augustine is not a positive entity. Evil has no efficient cause, but only a deficient cause. He was greatly obsessed by the sense of sin, and attacked the Pelagians for rejecting the doctrine of the original sin.”¹¹

“Rational thought is the servant of faith: 'unless thou believe thou shall not understand.' At the heart of Augustine's philosophy is the premise that only through faith can wisdom attained. He saw both philosophy and religion as quest for the same thing, namely truth. The philosopher without faith could never attain ultimate truth, which for Augustine was beatitude, or the enjoying of truth. Augustine maintained rational thought was the servant of faith.”²

Saint Augustine is one of the foremost philosophers of Christianity. When this fourth century neo-Platonic philosopher converted to Christianity, he had to struggle hard to reconcile faith with reason. He defined faith as the ability to think with consent. As a Christian, he advocated the basic contours of his faith but he could never leave the strong pull of reason. He believed that faith was the first step, the beginning, but it must be supplemented with reason. On one hand, he thought that faith is prior to reason. Reason is powerless to attain its objective, divine happiness and the blessed life. On the other, he also maintained that faith is inferior to reason, for without reason faith would be a blind faith. This was certainly not the Christian faith. Faith requires the work of understanding in order to bring it to its fully human nature. St. Augustine was not interested in philosophy for its own sake, as a discipline of

rational thinking; he was a theologian, the philosopher of religion. As such, he wanted philosophy to be the handmaid of religion, not the other way round.

For Augustine, there are two classes of things known. One is those, which the mind perceives through the five senses, the other of those it perceives through itself. The first deals with the *material world*. The second is the *intelligible world, known by the mind independent of sense experience*. All knowledge is the work of soul. For Augustine, soul is a substance endowed with reason and fitted to rule the body. He does not follow the Platonic distinction of body and soul. Body, for Plato, is mortal but the soul is eternal. Augustine does not accept this Platonic duality. Man, for him, is composed of body and soul and man could not be without either of these two constituents. Man is a rational soul making use of a material body. Augustine distinguishes *corporeal* from *spiritual* sight. The first is seeing with eyes. This is corporeal seeing. The operation of mind belongs to another class. What is before the mind is the *likeness* of the objects, not the objects themselves? The role of will is important for Augustine. When man's attention tuned to the images of the mind, it leads to the experience of *spiritual sight*. When this image transferred to the experience of the body, it becomes a *corporeal sight*. The feeling of the externality of what we perceive distinguishes sense perception from imagination. *Augustine talks of the physical process involved in sense-awareness as conveying messages to the mind, of corporeal sight as the messenger to the superior, spiritual sight. The third and the highest kind of sight, which he calls intellectual, interpret, judges and correct the messages.*

TRUTH AND REASON

“The precondition of knowledge is gracious illumination by God. For Christians, knowledge follows → faith as its completion. The starting point of knowledge is the → authority of → revelation and of the teaching that found in Holy Scripture and church tradition. Faith is rational, and this view is the basis of the view that faith is enough for salvation. Yet the demand for the greatest possible understanding of what believed is deeply rooted in the nature of reason. To the extent that what is known and what is believed are one and the same, knowledge can replace the authority of faith (though genuinely so only in the future life).”¹³

Augustine argues that truth discovered only when mind has access to itself without the medium of bodily senses. This is the only domain where certainty is possible. For Plato, there are two worlds, the intelligible world where dwells truth and the sensible world where we deal only with the shadows or copies. The neo-Platonic understanding of Augustine follows the Platonic theory. However, with Augustine, the sensible world is not ignored. The soul and the body are considered here as two complementary constituents. For knowledge and truth, Augustine cites often the propositions of mathematics and logic. The mathematical axioms and propositions never based on experimental data. He argues that the concept of unity is never an empirical datum; objects experienced are always made of parts, endlessly divisible into parts. When we talk of a whole, or perceive a whole, it follows this comprehension only

of the mind. At the same time, the sense experience not altogether ignored. He argues that the *“knowledge of eternal truth is also a kind of empirical knowledge, superior to that derived from sense-experience in that it is derived from a superior kind of experience, one accessible to the mind without the intermediary of body. It is not subject to the uncertainties and relativities to which sense-experience is subject. Understanding is the same thing for the mind as seeing is for body. Reason is the mind’s sight. The theory of eternal truths existing in their own right as independent objects of intellectual knowledge suggest the way they are known is somehow analogous to the way that the independently existing objects of sight are seen”*¹⁴

Augustine believes that thinking and reasoning discover their objects and do not create them. He draws no fundamental distinction between the propositions of logic and the basic certainties of moral judgement. Augustine identifies the intelligible world with the divine mind. It is God’s creative wisdom. The knowledge of the intelligible world is a mental vision. For Plato, the intellectual light pervading the world of forms is analogous to the light, which renders material things visible to the world. The intellectual light emanates from the supreme form rendering even the inferior forms intelligible to the mind, like the sun, itself supremely visible, makes other things visible. *For Augustine, these forms are within the divine mind and the intellectual light, which renders them intelligible, is a divine illumination within the human mind.*

REMINISCENCE

Plato’s theory of reminiscence or previous memory is the basis of the knowledge of pure forms or the eternal truth. This *priori* knowledge left in the mind a kind of memory of another pre- and supra-mundane life. Augustine does not accept Plato’s theory of reminiscence. For him, *“knowledge of the forms, ideas, concepts are not produced by the mind remembering something deposited in it previously, but it is continually discovered in the light which is perpetually present in the mind. The intellectual soul is inserted by the Creator into the natural order of intelligible realities and as such it is capable of seeing these in a certain non-corporeal light just as the corporeal eye sees things which surround it.”*¹⁵

For Augustine, images and concepts in the mind are the material of judgements made under illumination by the divine light. The eternal truth is the origin of all temporal things; it is an echo of the divine, eternal truth. In it, we behold by a perception of the mind the patterns, which govern our social, physical world as well as our divine world. The cosmological truths govern the anthropological behavior. Man, as such, is not a simple social or anthropological being; he existentially placed in the cosmic vision in direct correspondence with God, the Eternal Truth. *The human mind is capable of transcending itself. When the mind turns to the divine illumination, it perceives not only the anthropological and cosmological truth necessary for a religious, pious life but also the sublime vision of the Creator Himself.* God Himself is present in this divine mind. It becomes known to us when we turn to him under

this divine illumination. The human mind privileged above other things only in being able to turn toward and acknowledge this divine presence.

MAN, AND GOD FOR GURU NANAK AND SAINT AUGUSTINE

Augustine advises man to ‘know himself’. Man must become conscious about the fact that he is imperfect, dependent, and helpless and alienated from God. This is a necessary requirement to escape from this predicament. Nevertheless, it is not possible without God’s grace and the basis of faith.

Augustine had a clear anthropological vision also. In his hierarchical classification of things, human being is a composition of two elements, soul and body. Initially, the two elements were in perfect harmony, but after humanity's fall, disharmony followed.

“Augustine defends the Christian doctrine that God created the world out of nothing.”¹⁶ This is akin to another Greek thought that cosmos came out of chaos- ‘the formless void: a state of utter confusion and disorder’.

HARMONY AND DISCORD

It is in the context of the religious discourse that we explore the cosmological aspects in Guru Nanak. We also alluded to the theology in the work of the fourth century Christian theologian, Saint Augustine. There is a conceptual similarity between the two reflections. Guru Nanak’s discourse is within the context of the Indian philosophical tradition. On the other hand, Augustine’s reflections are strictly within the earlier Christian tradition even though they heavily influenced by the neo-Platonic ideas of his times. “Man is God’s creature, made with a view to enjoying happiness in the vision of God. In this vision and loving union, man attains his definitive state of rest, all else is striving and tension, conscious or blind, groping toward this fulfillment. “Thou hast made us, and in making us turned us toward thyself (*fecisti nos ad te*) and *our hearts are restless until they rest in thee*. So runs a famous phrase at the beginning of the *Confessions*. Man’s nature embraces a multitude of desires, impulses, and drives, some conscious and some not; all these are in fact, though we are not aware of it, implicitly desires for the fulfillment which is to be had in its entirety only in the beatific vision.”¹⁷

According to Augustine:

Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.¹⁸

Compare Guru Nanak:

āsā mālā 1 || ākhā jīvā visarē mar jāu ||¹⁹

In meditation, I resonate, in distraction, I wither away.

jē tan bānī visar jāe | jio pakā rogī vilalāe ||१||²⁰

When the being is oblivious of the Divine Word, he is stuck with excruciating pains and cries in distress.

ik til piārā vīsare rog vaḍā man māhe ||²¹

Guru Nanak's belief regarding the Supreme Being is that "I utter the Name of God, I live, if I forget it, I must die. Then how can I forget it."²² In meditation, I am blessed; in distraction, I wither away. So that one who regularly repeats or listens the Name of the Lord becomes pure and all sorrow, impurities and the dirt of ego flees away. Nanak says, by remembering God alienation and transgressions destroyed. A moment's distraction, a moment's forgetfulness, leads to misery and misfortune, to the mind in distress. How can one honored in His audience if the Creator does not dwell in one's heart? With the blessings of the Guru, there is peace of mind, the fire of passion is subdued, and the mind finds peace and grace. One should always meditate and reflect upon the Order of the Creator. Those who never forget their Creator are rare in this world. The sublime light of the Creator enlightens body and soul, brings divine union with one's Lord. In this divine union, there is no violence, no passion, no lust, and no mental conflict. The final Emancipation can only be obtained when the Name reside in the heart of the devotee.

Man's nature is replete with desires, some good, and some bad. Some desires lead man to happiness and beatitude, some lead him to degeneration and destruction. For Augustine, man's "godwardness" thus inscribed in his very nature. Augustine gives an example of weight. The heavy weight falls down the lightweight goes up. The good deeds of man, the love for righteousness is man's weight. It leads him to the right direction, to the love of God. A stone will fall if its support removed; there is no question of its will. However, man endowed with the faculty of will. If he wills to do well, to love and reflect, he will pull towards God. If he is engrossed in evil deeds, he will estrange from the Creator. Hence, human beings have the option of choice and free will. Augustine argues that the word, love, covers the elementary forces, passions, emotions and inclinations of all kinds and on the other hand, it covers freely chosen inclinations and voluntary preferences. To begin with, the conflicting desires and inclinations, desires, emotions, urges are neutral. However, man being a rational creature is his own master. He is supposed to critically examine these passions and follow those, which lead him to happiness, love, and union with his Creator. When man is unable to control his passions, when he chooses to follow evil, he estranged from his Creator. Augustine calls this state of the being as *alienatio* and describes it as a voluntary surrender to impulses, which lead him to involuntary captivity.

Augustine believes that right love leads to righteous life. He is concerned with moral life in this world. He would have anthropological world charged with cosmological vision. He insists on the will of man. This is where the question of right or wrong choice introduced. A

right will be right love, says Augustine, and a perverse will is perverse love. Desire to possess, fear, passion, indulgence are all-evil. They lead to evil love. *Man's task is to order his inclinations and passions in such a way that his actions follow the divine order. Love itself loved critically, says Augustine, so that what ought to be loved is rightly loved, and thereby we achieve virtue to live well.* This rightly ordered love is the love of a sage. Augustine continues: a man lives righteously and in holiness if he has ordered love, which prevents him from loving what not loved. This order leads to harmony and union with the Creator. This is the right law, the right conduct. To quote Augustine: *"This discipline is God's law itself, which, while always remaining in him fixed and unalterable, is transcribed into the souls of the wise, in such a manner, that they know that their lives are the better and the more sublime in proportion to the degree of perfection of their contemplating it by their minds and keeping it in their lives. The realization of this order is wisdom, and its attainment is a work of the mind in accordance with the eternal law. This law is God's sovereign reason."*²³

This leads to Augustine's concept of *order* or *rational order*, which in this context is divine order. For Augustine, the divine activity follows a rationality that is spiritual, that is inspired by the divine dictate. This notion of order is central to Augustine's thinking. This is obviously a neo-Platonic philosophy. It also includes the Christian concepts of suffering and pain. This world is not perfect. There is disorder and dis-organization. There is a lack of harmony. However, all these miseries and natural evils can be surmounted by following the divine order. The divine order is not only perfect; it can bring harmony and peaceful co-existence in all things, material or spiritual. This is where the fundamental Christian concept of divine revelation in the form of Jesus Christ is very significant. Augustine is not a philosopher in the ordinary sense of the term. He does not simply rely on reason and logic; his basic anchor remains the divine intervention in the history of humankind.

The discourse on Truth is both religious and philosophical. In this context, we have often referred to the Christian philosopher of the fourth century, Saint Augustine. Let us see how he reflects on this concept as presented by R. A. Markus:

"In a very real sense he has made knowledge of "eternal truths" a kind of empirical knowledge, superior to that derived from sense-experience only in that it is derived from a superior kind of experience, one accessible to the mind without the intermediary of the body, and not subject to the uncertainties and relativities to which sense-experience is subject."²⁴

The intellectual light emanates from the supreme form, that of the good, and illuminates both the inferior forms, thus rendering them intelligible; and the mind that understands them -- like the sun, itself supremely visible -- makes other things visible by illuminating them. For Augustine, the forms are within the divine mind, and the intellectual light, which renders them intelligible, is a divine illumination within the human mind. Augustine speaks of this

illumination in a number of different ways, as the mind's participation in the Word of God, as God's interior presence to the mind, as Christ dwelling in the human soul and teaching the mind from within.

“After enumerating a long list of things on which most of us would agree as good. he remarks: “In all these good things which I have enumerated or any others you may discover or think of, we could not say that one is better than another when we make a true judgment about them, unless there was imprinted upon us a concept of good itself (*nisi esset nobis impressa notio ipsius boni*), according to which we approve things and prefer some to others.” This impossibility of drawing any line between idea and judgment appears very clearly, for instance, in what Augustine says about our knowledge of the human mind. Yet, in the light of the eternal truth, we can say certain things universally true about the mind as such. We do not get such a general idea of the mind by generalizing from our experience of individual minds, but we “perceive the inviolable truth, whence we define perfectly –as far as we are able – not what this or that man's mind is like, but what it ought to be in the light of the eternal truth.”²⁵

Guru Nanak's concept of *sach*, Truth, covers all aspects of the anthropological as well as cosmological universe, the Brahmand. It is the very basis of the Cosmic Order. It is conceptually opposed to falsehood, corruption, decadence, deception etc. Those who follow the cosmic order, who meditate and reflect upon the cosmic vision, who are in tune with the cosmic rhythm, they are integrated in the cosmological rhythm.

Those who are stuck in greed and lust, who are drenched in dishonesty and deception, who are rotten in thought and deed, they are alienated, estranged.

Let us see how alienation perceived by Saint Augustine as presented by R. A. Markus:

“The conflicting desires and inclinations, passions, emotions, and urges – all the springs of action – are thus morally neutral. However, man, being a rational creature, is – at least to some extent – his own master; he is required to assess his natural impulses critically and to choose among them. He has to commit himself in voluntary action to one or another of what is often a bewildering complex of incompatible desires, where the satisfaction of one often involves the frustration of others. This self-committal in choice may take the form of abandoning oneself to the natural forces within one, taking the line of least resistance, and, in fact, surrendering the mind's freedom of choice and judgment. Augustine calls this “estrangement” (*alienatio*), and describes it as a voluntary surrender to impulses that solicit the mind's consent, which may, he thinks, in the end lead to involuntary captivity. This, however, is only one of the possible types of situations. Indeed, the choice may well lie, not between “duty” and “inclination”, but between alternative inclinations.”²⁶

The basic theme in the religious discourse is the relation/non-relation of human beings with God, the Creator of the universe. This discourse takes different forms. For Augustine, an estranged or alienated being becomes avaricious, greedy, who follows his low instincts. Instead of love of God, there is the love for the worldly pleasures.

Augustine had stated, the hearts are restless until they rest in Thee. (Confessions). For Guru Nanak, a moment's separation leads to misery and distress, to disease and decadence.

Those who are in tune with the rhythm of the cosmos, with the divine discourse of the Guru, they are wise and sage. With the blessing of the Guru, the devotee crosses the river of misery and misfortune. Those who follow the divine Word, they are in tune with the rhythm of the cosmos.

CONCLUSION

At the end, it can conclude that the study highlighted the major issue which most of the human beings were facing. The present study analyzed all kind of theological, Social and the individual estrangement and disharmony. Basic split in human existence caused by consciousness is the source of what one can call existential alienation. Thus, human existence split in two, into a manifest and a hidden sphere; one actualized, the other suppressed. The study recommended that the Fallen from the grace of God, man lead a miserable life, suffering the pains of solitude and loneliness. St. Augustine continued the Platonic tradition of absolute and universal Idea. He was concerned with human discord from God, -the Creator. It was primarily an individual, subjective alienation and anguish. When we consider, Saint Augustine and Guru Nanak, we find that they had similar ideas. Both authors address the question of the existence of God and the importance of God for human beings. They provide entirely new ways to interpret the world. They have shaped the way we understand our reality and have provided methodologies for its analysis. In The present analytical survey, we intend to show that the philosophical doctrines of Guru Nanak are quite unique and different from other traditions., In the overall semiotic universe of signification, the micro conceptual constructs or compositions In the Cosmic discourse of Guru Nanak function as complementary semantic units.

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